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The Week

BY HIS order for the purchase and coinage of silver, the President has soothed an active group of so-called inflationists in a relatively harmless way. The silver bloc has argued in behalf of rising prices, which they contended would be brought about by extensive buying of silver, and has also urged that raising the price of silver would help restore the buying power of countries which use silver coin mainly, such as China. But what they really were most interested in was selling the product of American silver mines. The President's order that all newly mined American silver be bought at a price which in practice will amount to about twenty cents higher than the current market rate gives a subsidy to the silver producers and through them will help very slightly to increase general purchasing power. But it is not by any means an inflationary measure, since the amount of silver coin added to the circulating medium will not be enough, in comparison with the money total, to produce any tangible result. And it probably will not add noticeably to the purchasing power of the silver-standard countries, especially in view of their agreement at London not to sell on the world market more than limited quotas of silver reclaimed from coins. The whole arrangement is a price-valorization agreement for the benefit of silver mines, and nothing else. Its general economic effect will be slight; its political effect may help in deflating the congressional inflationists.

FEW acts of President Roosevelt's career have done him more credit than his general amnesty to conscientious objectors during the War. Of the 1,500 individuals who now receive full pardon, none is still in prison; but all of them have until now been denied their citizenship rights, which are at last fully restored. A large proportion of these individuals refused to bear arms because of conscientious scruples—scruples which are now shared by a far larger proportion of the population than was the case fifteen years ago. In most cases, they should not have been subject to any penalty of the law, and this is equally true of those who were convicted because they sought to maintain the ordinary right of free speech guaranteed in the Constitution. Few things in our history are more disgraceful than the black chapter of oppression during the War, and the national error should have been rectified long ago by one of Mr. Roosevelt's predecessors in office. Since, however, it wasn't, he deserves and will receive credit for making amends, however tardy, to the victims of hysteria.

THE "cold pogrom" of the German Nazis is daily driving more Jews out of their occupations. A new edict, to take effect on January 1, prohibits the employment of Jews for editorial or illustrative work in the newspaper and publishing business, with the exception of "those professional journalists who served at the front during the World War." The edict further excludes all Socialists and Communists from employment as journalists, illustrators or photographers on German newspapers, magazines or books, and provides that licenses for the publication, management of or employment on newspapers, books or periodicals shall be issued by the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment only to such persons as "are not under suspicion of Marxist opinion or activity." German newspapers, which under Nazi direction have assumed a uniformity of content and editorial position that amounts to spiritual petrification, will become even

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more sterile if only men of guaranteed National Socialist opinion are to be employed. A similar edict announces new restrictions for non-Aryan students of medicine and jurisprudence. Dr. Rust, Minister of Education, sent a circular letter to university authorities a few days ago giving Jewish students the choice of either maintaining their German citizenship, which would eliminate them, as Jews, from state examinations and licenses, or of relinquishing their citizenship rights and becoming "guests" on German soil, which would entitle them to take examinations but would exclude them from practising their professions in that country. The Jewish student in Germany may now choose the process by which he is to commit economic suicide.

THOSE who thought that the Nazis were joking when they proposed sterilization for several groups in the population supposedly suffering from hereditary diseases, have been rudely awakened. The new law that goes into effect this week will be applied, it is estimated, to some 400,000 persons. The wishes of the individual will not be consulted; if, in the opinion of the medical authorities, after a quasi-judicial procedure, he is found to come within one of the classes named in the statute, the operation will be performed. Scientists are sharply divided about the desirability of such a policy, even assuming that it is honestly carried out and is not used as a means of punishment of "enemies of the state." Many of them argue that we do not yet know enough about the supposed laws of eugenics to say infallibly what characteristics are likely to be transmitted, and they point out that if the law had been applied in the past, some of the world's greatest benefactors would never have been born. The Germans, of course, are making this scheme part of their mythology of the "pure race." Perhaps the most that can be said for it is that the rest of the world has reason to be grateful to Herr Hitler for undertaking an experiment no one else was likely to try.

THE three-day strike of many thousands of truckmen in Philadelphia, called in sympathetic support of 1,100 locked-out taxi drivers, has doubtless given the administration more concern than any other labor revolt under the N.R.A. Bitter resentment against the National Labor Board's failure to compel the Budd Auto Body Manufacturing Company, the Ford Motor Company at Chester and the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company to bargain collectively with worker-controlled unions, and against the Board's delays in acting upon complaints of shipyard workers', truckmen's and bakery-wagon drivers' unions, has long been smoldering in Philadelphia labor ranks. Last week it flared into a sympathetic general strike of the nine unions affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers, when the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company rejected the Board's decision favoring arbitration between the company and the unions which it refuses to recognize.

DESPERATE efforts to avert the general strike, by Dr. William M. Leiserson, executive secretary of the National Labor Board, who pleaded for an hour and a half before the teamsters' joint council, and by Senator Wagner, were of no avail against the tumultuous chant of "Strike! Strike!" by thousands of workers gathered outside union headquarters. For a brief time it appeared probable that the Central Labor Union would call a one-day protest strike of all organized workers in the city. But before that question could be submitted to a vote, the National Labor Board, after weeks of delay in arbitrating a wage dispute, granted the bakery-wagon drivers a substantial increase. This caused them to desert the general strike. Immediate action was also promised to the shipyard workers' union, which had threatened a walkout in Philadelphia, Camden, Chester and Wilmington. Finally, Daniel G. Tobin, international president of the Teamsters' Union, denounced the strike as unauthorized by his office, and threatened to revoke the charters of all participating unions, whereupon four more withdrew. The largest unions, however, including the milk-wagon drivers, remain on strike.

THE temper of workers in the larger industrial centers, as revealed in this first major sympathetic strike under the N.R.A., should make apparent to Washington the profound disillusionment and distrust that is developing toward the New Deal. Promises will no longer satisfy. Unless decisive steps are taken soon to outlaw company unions, strikes of this character will be likely to spread to other cities. The conflict between the Taxi Drivers' Union and the P.R.T. has been marked by worse violence than Philadelphia has known for many years. The police, in their best tradition, have arrested approximately 400 strikers, many of whom have been held incommunicado. The strikers have responded by burning some 100 cabs. Following a joint rally of P.R.T. and Budd strikers addressed by Norman Thomas at Reyburn Plaza, 4,000 strikers and sympathizers paraded in the central city district, stoning, overturning and burning cabs and fighting and disarming policemen. In this struggle the National Labor Board, whether by conscious intent of its members or not, has served as a strike-breaking agency. To persuade strikers to return to work, upon assurances that their right to collective bargaining will be recognized and their grievances arbitrated, when the Board has not the power nor the will to fulfill its promises, is to betray the workers. The bakery-wagon drivers were led to break the solidarity of the general strike by these promises, but the baking companies have indicated that they will follow the precedent of Weir, Budd and the P.R.T. The cab drivers, who are wholly under Socialist leadership, have struck a sympathetic response among many other disillusioned workers by

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spurning the request of the Board. It is safe to predict that their example will be followed by thousands of other strikers in coming weeks.

WHEN radio broadcasting was invented, about fifteen years ago, high hopes were held out for its social usefulness; but so far as the United States is concerned, most of these hopes have come to little and especially those that centered about the use of the radio for news broadcasting. Many prophets at first predicted that the daily press might even disappear when everyone obtained instantaneous information regarding everything that was going on by means of his receiving set. Though it is still possible that some invention, not yet perfected, may bring this about, the present move seems to be in the opposite direction. When Utah was about to ratify repeal, when the Lindberghs were flying the South Atlantic, you could twirl the knobs in vain for information, unless by accident you happened to catch the right station at the right moment for the news you sought.

NOW, a compact has been arranged between the broadcasters and the daily press which will make the radio even less useful than heretofore. Under this agreement, the day's news will not be heard on the air until nine o'clock at night, except in the case of some happening of great importance, which will be announced from time to time in thirty-word bulletins. Both of the big broadcasting chains have agreed to scrap any news-gathering facilities of their own which now exist or were planned. Newspapers and radio have long been competitors for advertising; and the press, annoyed by this competition and fearful lest news broadcasting should become of importance, had contemplated an extremely effective form of reprisal. This was to stop printing daily radio programs, which the broadcasters regard as vital to their welfare. The peace terms that have now been adopted (subject to ratification) take care of everybody—everybody, that is, except the listener-in who wants to hear the day's news while it is still fresh.

IN SETTING up the organization through which its plan of relief for unemployed artists is to be carried out, the administration has acted with an intelligence unusual in governmental dealings with art and artists. The indignation of the academic art-societies is proof enough of that. In the past they have been very much in on all federal works calling for the coöperation of artists, and now suddenly they find themselves left out in the cold—not even consulted about the administration of the relief fund which will employ some 2,500 artists in the decoration of public buildings. That the slight was deliberate came out in the statement of Mrs. Juliana R. Force, regional director for New York, that she was "forbidden" to appoint to her assisting committee "art critics, art dealers, individual artists and sculptors and the heads of organizations of artists." Quite clearly the administration is wisely determined to keep this movement as free as possible from politics, log-rolling, favoritism and censorship. And that is extremely intelligent.

IT IS significant that the indignation is confined to the academic organizations. They have a lot at stake. For seventy-five years their members have filled public buildings, at high prices, with thousands of mawkish variations on "idealistic" themes and as many badly conceived and executed historical paintings and sculptures. Thanks to their influence, this country has spent millions of dollars on decorative work without developing a decorative art. Now their monopoly is menaced by a project which will allow a great many talented artists opportunities to work in a branch of art which, for a whole complex of reasons, has been almost exclusively the province of the untalented. And much that is good may come of it. Indeed, a whole new and vital decorative art may come of it, as the great modern Mexican school of fresco painting came of President Obregon's allowing Mexican painters to work at plumbers' wages on the decoration of government buildings. And then what will become of the academy's muses and seasons, its knights and pilgrims, its conventional textbook interpretations of history?

A REPRESENTATIVE of the Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers, Carl Holdeman, has addressed a letter to Senator Wagner urging that in the amendment to be sought by the Senator to strengthen Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, he include such phrases as will specifically outlaw company unions brought into existence by intimidative and coercive policies of anti-union employers. As an example, he cites the Julius Kayser Company, of Bangor, Pennsylvania. Workers of this firm had voted in favor of affiliating with the A. F. of L. union, in spite of the fact that the vote was held on company property at a meeting called by the management. Yet several employees have accepted election as company-union representatives because of fear of discrimination by the management. The management contends that it has severed all connection with the company union because no foreman or company official is now permitted to act as one of its officers; nevertheless, the proposed constitution of that union was submitted to the management for approval before it was submitted to the workers; and workers who were outspokenly in favor of the A. F. of L. union were laid off for an indefinite period because of "lack of orders" or "machine repairs." Such practices are like those recently outlawed by Railroad Coördinator Eastman under the railroad act. Either the N.I.R.A. is not so explicit on these points as is the railroad law, or else it needs better administration.

DESPITE fear on the part of some small-town reporters and apathy from many established journal-

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ists, newspapermen are organizing throughout the United States. The American Newspaper Guild, which was organized at a convention of newspapermen in Washington, December 15, has 3,000 members and is growing rapidly. Encouraged by the N.R.A., newspapermen are rebelling against the long hours, low and unequal pay and increasing precariousness of employment in their supposedly picturesque life. Its members listen skeptically to the publishers' clamor for a free press. Heywood Broun and Walter Lippmann have both punctuated the free-press myth in their columns and lesser figures are now saying the same thing. The New York Guild, with a strength of 1,100 and new members entering at the rate of 100 a week, has large delegations from almost every paper and news organization. The Herald Tribune's staff members have joined the Guild almost 100 percent. The exception is The New York Sun; employees of The Sun have not been forbidden to join, they say, but there is an undefined fear in the air. There have been reprisals on the small papers in some of the communities near New York. Reporters lost their jobs for joining the Guild; others who had joined left and explained that they were afraid to stay in. In a membership campaign to be started soon, the national organization will make a particular effort to bring in the small-town newspapermen, who have always had to work harder and longer and for less money than newspapermen in the cities.

MOST of the highly paid newspaper employees—the columnists, special writers, syndicate people—and the executives fight shy of the Guild, which is now strengthening its organization before attempting to force an adjustment of wages and working conditions. In the New York office, registrations are now being taken for publicity and editorial work under the Civil Works Administration; a paper, The Guild Reporter, is being published and an attempt is being made to relieve conditions of newspaper employment by enlarging the field of activity for employed newspaper people who want to get into other work. Another activity will be the preparation with medical men of a plan for health service. In working for wage adjustments, the Guild will try "friendliness" and publicity rather than force; talk of a strike is deprecated as absurd. Unionized printers approve the Guild. An official of the A. F. of L. has declared that editorial workers should be paid at least as much as printers. However, the irrepressible delusions of most newspapermen that they are not workingmen is preventing the Guild from affiliating with organized labor, as actors affiliated long ago.

FOR years the American Association for Social Insurance has been working for old-age pensions, with considerable success. It has now turned its attention to unemployment insurance, and while the present crisis has set the entire country to thinking of this problem it has also reduced the Association's resources, so that at the very time when its work should be receiving the most attention it has been difficult to bring it before the public. The new model unemployment-insurance bill, drawn up by Dr. I. M. Rubinow, Professor Paul Douglas and others, has received scarcely more notice than a confidential report. In general the bill provides for the establishment of a fund, to be built up partially by employers, who must pay two percent of their entire pay rolls; by employees, who pay one percent of their wages; and by the state, which pays one percent of the pay rolls of all employers subject to the act. Provisions for benefits are carefully worked out with reference to seasonal work and part-time employment; the boundary lines at which benefits stop are strictly defined and the usual objections to unemployment insurance answered. By the provisions of the bill, an unemployed worker could be paid a minimum of 40 percent of his full-time wages or a maximum of $10 a week with special provisions for his dependents. In any year a properly qualified employee would be entitled to benefits until these totaled the amount he would receive were he totally unemployed for six months. The bill is designed to protect those now employed rather than solve the unemployment crisis, and could be set up at once without radical financial or administrative measures. This bill differs from the model bill of the American Association for Labor Legislation as well as from the Wisconsin plan. It should be possible to discuss fully the various proposals, while at the same time uniting efforts to obtain some kind of unemployment insurance, in spite of the opposition of those who favor no kind.

EVENTS of the past few weeks have sharpened public interest in the exact meaning of the words about "collective bargaining" in the N.I.R.A. The normal meaning attributed to "collective bargaining" by most economists refers to dealing with labor organizations, and to organizations not restricted to a particular shop. Even Mr. Michael, representing the Virginia Manufacturers' Association, admitted this at the hearings on the N.I.R.A. What was in the mind of Mr. Richberg, the man who drafted the N.I.R.A.? What did he mean by it when he wrote this section? Discussion at the congressional hearings is illuminating:

> Senator Couzens: . . . I am talking about this collective-bargaining agreement mentioned in the Act.
>
> Mr. Richberg: Which must be by labor organizations.

Again, on August 29, Mr. Richberg said:

> It was and is clearly evident to all immediately concerned in the drafting that the whole scheme of self-government in industry would fall to the ground without labor participation. . . . It is simply impossible to maintain satisfactory labor relations in modern enterprise . . . without some form of labor organization. It is impossible to carry out the program to

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stabilize production and employment without the co-operation of genuinely representative labor organizations.

Employer groups, too, realized that the N.I.R.A. was based on a rapid growth of unionism. Else why should they attempt to qualify the codes with open-shop and company-union provisions? The only possible meaning of these moves is the realization that the foundations of Section 7a lay in organized labor. Even after the N.R.A. refused to allow qualifications, The Iron Age suggested conforming with the letter but not with the spirit—thereby admitting that its spirit required unions. Speakers have generally referred to the N.R.A. as making partners of labor and capital. The question then is: are both partners to be organized, or only one? Four days after the Act was signed, Johnson said that it was not the "purpose of the administration to compel the organization of either industry or labor." On December 7, General Johnson said: "We have a mandate under the Act to foster the organization of industry for coöperative actions among trade groups. But we have no such mandate as to labor." What of Senator Wagner's claim that equality between labor and capital is "the essence of the Recovery Act?"

It's Up to Labor

PRESIDENT William Green of the A. F. of L. has sent a richly deserved protest to General Johnson about the failure to enforce collective bargaining in the Ford plant at Edgewater, in accordance with the intent of Section 7a of the Recovery Act. This is only one of many justified complaints on the part of labor officials concerning the way in which the law is being enforced—or rather, in many cases, is not being enforced. We do not wish in the least to minimize the importance of such complaints, but it is necessary to observe at the same time that the organized labor movement is leaning on the weakest of reeds if it expects the passage of a law to guarantee its status or counts upon the action of government officials in Washington to bring about justice. Even the best possible law, administered by the best intentioned official, cannot get very far unless there is behind it a substantial amount of support among the people concerned in its operation. This is one of the axioms of government.

In the case of collective bargaining this is true to an unusual degree. An employer who does not want to bargain with an independent union of his employees will not so bargain if there is any way for him to escape it. A struggle to make him do so is not an ordinary business or political dispute; it is a sample of the class struggle in its rawest form. If employers were, by and large, converted to the advisability of genuine collective bargaining, no law would be needed to enforce it—though laws might aid in policing it and in bringing a minority of recalcitrants into line. But when a majority of the more important employers of the country remain, as they have been for years, bitter and convinced opponents of unionism, the most that a law can do is to give labor a little better opportunity to carry on a struggle against them. The action of the employers, the extent to which they can turn the law and the courts to serve their own purposes, will depend more than anything else on the power which the workers are able to develop in the economic and political fields of action. The pressure which the government can exert upon employers in behalf of labor's rights is directly proportional to the pressure which labor can exert both upon employers and upon government.

A symptom of this truth is the difference in the attitude toward strikes now and during the War. Government agencies in both cases deplored strikes, because interruptions of production obstructed their program. During the War, however, there was a labor shortage, and in spite of the lack of preparation and the primitive state of the labor movement, the workers were easily able to organize and win strikes. The government, therefore, not only lectured labor in the effort to prevent strikes, but exerted real and immediate compulsion upon employers to adjust disputes peaceably by granting concessions to dissatisfied workers. A mere threat of strike was usually enough to bring about acceptance of collective bargaining on the part of employers. The employer's alternative, if he would not accept the form of mediation proposed by the government, was a costly shut-down while orders for war materials went elsewhere. Now, however, recalcitrant employers like the steel companies and the motor concerns can delay and debate and evade; finally, if need be, they can defy the government and compel it to take legal action, if it has the resolution to act at all. The basic reason is, not that government officials are now any less well disposed toward labor, but that labor is in a less favorable economic position. Only solid and well led organizations of automobile and steel workers could force the issue more effectively.

Though there is now a great labor surplus instead of a shortage, many other conditions have favored the building of unions during the past few months. More effective relief measures, shorter hours, minimum wages and a growing public-works program have diminished the threat that the unemployed may become strike-breakers. Public sentiment, even among many employers, has favored higher wages. More important than all, the passage of the new legislation itself instilled hope and confidence in the workers; they are ready for organization as they have not been for years. The more aggressive and better led unions, like those in the clothing trades, have taken advantage of this situation. They have taken advantage of it not only by organization in the field, but by the action of skilled representatives in Washington. These representatives have had a real voice both in the drafting and

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in the administration of their codes. In these industries the New Deal looks much more genuinely new than it does in many others.

But the labor movement in general missed its opportunity. Resounding pronouncements were issued about the millions it expected to add to its membership. But it did not prepare to do the active organizing that was required. It did not remold its form of organization to fit the new situation. It had no central directive agency capable of acting quickly and effectively. The old habit of delegating jurisdiction to hidebound and short-sighted craft unions obstructed action. Although planning was supposed to be the order of the day, and some modest beginnings of planning were installed in the government, there was almost a complete absence of planning for its own job in the A. F. of L. Organized labor, instead of forcing the pace, has had to be dragged along behind the main procession by a few aggressive union leaders and a few liberal intellectuals in public office.

This was not a case in which the responsible officials of the A. F. of L. could take refuge in their old excuse of blaming the apathy of the rank and file. The workers themselves were, for the most part, ready and eager to go, and to go faster than the leaders wanted them to. Nor could the leaders blame hostile legislation or oppressive courts. They had legal sanction for the collective bargain, and the legal banishment of yellow-dog contracts and anti-labor injunctions. They even had legal support of a sort which they themselves had short-sightedly opposed—maximum hours and minimum wages set by law. They now have nothing to blame for the failure to organize a strong labor movement except the hostility of employers and their own ineptitude. They will only confirm the impression of their incompetence if they sit back and wait for the employers' hostility to disappear before modernizing their own policies and methods of attack.

The law which set up the N.R.A. and the other agencies of the New Deal is neither good nor bad in itself, since by itself, like any other scheme of printed words, it will do nothing. How it operates depends on the power applied and the direction given. It is an instrument—though of course a far from perfect instrument—which organized labor can use if it has the strength and intelligence to do so. In commenting on the activities of this administration at an early stage, The New Republic said that its most valuable and permanent contribution might turn out to be a strong labor movement. Certainly without such a movement the rest of its achievements will be hollow. Employers will monopolize the New Deal instruments if the workers—as both workers and consumers—do not use them. So far, the employers appear to be gaining a long head start. It is up to labor to do its own job. The A. F. of L. will have to wake up and establish a new deal in its own house, if Mr. Roosevelt's New Deal is to come anywhere near working.

Judge Bridlegoose's Verdict

IN ITS verdict fixing responsibility for the Reichstag fire, the German Supreme Court has greatly honored the memory of good Judge Bridlegoose. "But who was Bridlegoose?" some of our readers will ask, having forgotten the third book of "Gargantua and Pantagruel." Bridlegoose was the fifteenth-century jurist who invented an almost infallible method of settling actions at law to the relief of both the parties concerned. He had them both submit bills of complaint, accusations, impeachments, indictments, warnings, citations, hundreds and thousands of documents. He stuffed all the documents into leather bags and called for more of them, rejoinders, replies, answers to rejoinders, reëxaminations of witnesses, confronting of them together, more, more, till months and years had passed and both the plaintiffs and the defendants were bankrupt, exhausted, and asked only that the case be ended. Then he piled the bags on a great table and threw dice to see which side had won.

This, practically, is what the German Supreme Court has done at Leipzig. It has filed away tons of evidence, has let the trial drag on month after month, and finally has rendered a verdict which has only the semblance of being based upon the facts of the case. It is true that this verdict wasn't reached by throwing dice; but it must have been reached by another process Judge Bridlegoose would have been quick to endorse—that is, by balancing together, not the evidence, but the opposing forces of public opinion. The German Supreme Court tried to reach a verdict which would satisfy the Nazis, the German public and world opinion.

Four defendants were acquitted, in deference to world opinion. In deference to the Nazis, they were not released. World opinion was placated by the declaration that the accomplices of van der Lubbe were "unknown." For the sake of the Nazis, it was stated by the presiding judge that these unknown accomplices were undoubtedly "to be found in the ranks of the Communists." And so the great farce came to an end—for everybody, that is, except the four acquitted men. Their lives are still in jeopardy. According to the latest reports, Dimitroff, Taneff and Popoff, the three Bulgarian Communists, are to be tried for the use of false passports; if convicted, they can easily be beaten to death in a Nazi concentration camp, or shot "while trying to escape." Torgler, the fourth defendant, will probably be indicted for treason. The jubilation over their release is premature.

Yet even so, world opinion has inflicted a great defeat on the Nazis, simply by casting its weight into the judicial balance. It should not be forgotten that world opinion was first aroused by the "International Legal Commission of Inquiry." This unofficial tribunal, composed of distinguished jurists from European and American nations, obtained the depositions of important witnesses who could not

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venture on German soil. The testimony thus taken in London was submitted to the attorneys and judges at Leipzig, and doubtless prevented the prosecution from bringing into court a number of previously announced witnesses.

But not all of the evidence taken by the International Legal Commission of Inquiry was acted upon. After its last London session, the Commission sent the following telegram to the German Supreme Court: "Important testimony shows that Captain Röhrbein, now imprisoned in a police prison in Munich, confessed to fellow prisoners that he took part in the murder of Dr. Oberfohren, leader in the Reichstag of the German Nationalist People's party, and that the latter was assassinated because of his memorandum on the perpetrators of the Reichstag fire." The Oberfohren memorandum, published in The New Republic, made clear that the perpetrators of the Reichstag fire were the Nazis themselves. But the International Legal Commission received no answer to its telegram, nor were Captain Röhrbein and the prisoners to whom he made his confession placed on the witness stand. Judge Bridlegoose put thousands of documents into his leather bags, but there were some documents which he and his masters were afraid to handle.

Judge Lynch and John Law

RECENT events in Maryland, Missouri, Tennessee and California give painful timeliness to a book, "Lynching and the Law," written under the auspices of the Southern Commission on the Study of Lynching. The author, James Harmon Chadbourn, is an assistant professor of Law in the University of North Carolina. He has made a survey of the reported lynchings and attempted lynchings of the last forty years and of the steps taken both to forestall threatened lynchings and to punish the perpetrators of those accomplished. He analyzes legislation adopted or suggested toward both these ends and formulates model laws on the various subjects considered.

There are three ways in which threatened lynchings have been averted: by prompt use of the militia, by removal of proceedings to another county and by assurance of speedy trial. While Professor Chadbourn advocates laws to ensure more frequent use of these devices, he recognizes that at best they have often proved ineffectual. A speedy trial is sometimes a lynching under the aegis of the law; calling the militia may be merely public confirmation of the mob's determination that the accused shall die. It is true that some lynchings may be prevented by methods such as these, but it is only infrequently that a fair trial follows the resort to them. Even the change of venue seems a mere formula unless the change is to a community quite different in character. And sometimes the very demand for a change has provoked a lynching.

Rare as the resort to punitive measures has been, they seem more encouraging as preventive of future lynchings than the direct method of prevention just described. The statistics relied on, to be sure, are open to criticism, for the number of instances has been very small. But such as they are, the statistics indicate a decided falling off in the number of lynchings in communities in which perpetrators have been convicted, officers removed or the community fined. And even when the lynchers have not actually been punished, the mere institution of punitive proceedings appears to have had an ameliorative result.

Probably the most effective measure, because the easiest to administer, is community punishment. In eleven states, counties or municipalities are subject to fines or suits for damages for the benefit of dependents of persons killed by a mob, and in some of these states for the benefit of those injured. Professor Chadbourn has gathered some curious instances of the application of these laws which show how little can be foretold of how a law can come to be applied. In one Kansas case recovery was allowed under such a law because a man was run over by a wagon in which some merrymakers were parading against their will a newly wed couple.

Another measure which in rare instances has been effective is the removal of an officer for failure to prevent a lynching. Nine states have laws on this subject. The procedure in most cases, however, is cumbersome since it requires either conviction or impeachment. Simplification is essential along the lines Professor Chadbourn suggests in his model statute. Existing laws for the punishment of individual participants are adequate, but it is seldom possible to administer them on account of the unwillingness of people to turn state's evidence. Even when witnesses appear before the grand jury, experience shows such universal lapses of memory at the trials that convictions are rare.

The outlook for preventing lynchings by improvements in legal machinery remains dark. The mere fact that a study such as Professor Chadbourn's has been conducted and financed by Southerners is, however, encouraging. It indicates a searching of heart which might eventually have wide consequences.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Politics in the Reichstag Trial

This article was written before the German Supreme Court handed down its verdict. Trotsky asks whether it would "Seek inspiration in the classic decision of Kiev justice." It did. Like the Tsarist court in the Beyliss case, it was forced by evidence and world opinion to acquit the principal defendants—convicting only the irresponsible van der Lubbe—but it did everything in its power to maintain the hypothesis that some unknown Communists really burned the Reichstag. And although it acquitted Torgler, Dimitroff and their two comrades, it did not set them free—THE EDITORS.

THE REICHSTAG fire trial is nearing its climax. What sort of a decision will be dictated to the judges from above? The government is in a predicament. If one looked for historical precedents, one would most naturally pause on the Dreyfus case in France and the Beyliss trial in Tsarist Russia. Captain Dreyfus was successfully condemned to Devil's Island despite the lack of evidence, thanks to the fact that the court-martial proceeded behind closed doors. In the Beyliss trial, which was open to the public and in which the press actively participated, the rulers proved powerless to force through the conviction of a Jewish shop-clerk for the murder of a Christian boy. But the court did bring in a verdict to the effect that the murder could have been committed for ritualistic purposes.

Will Hitler, perhaps, be compelled to seek inspiration in the classic decision of Kiev justice? Because it is impossible to sustain in any way whatever the charge against the Communists who were fortuitously seized, the Leipzig court may decree that the crime was committed by the Communist party through criminals unknown. Göring, of course, would like very much to hang Dimitroff. But it is of utmost importance to the government that roasted its chestnuts in the flames of the Reichstag to establish that this fire was perpetrated, if not by these, then by some other Communists. That is the political task. However, it is precisely in its political aspect that the Leipzig trial is weakest. Not only is the indictment false juridically but it is absurd politically.

With what end in mind did the Communist party supposedly set fire to the Reichstag? The official answer reads: it was intended as a signal for insurrection. Through continued use this formula appears to have acquired a semblance of content. But it is really hollow. A signal is a signal only if its meaning is clear to those for whom it is intended. For example, during the October insurrection in Petrograd, the leaders had arranged beforehand that a blank shot would be fired by the cruiser "Aurora" when a red lantern appeared on the spire of the Peter and Paul fortress. Should the Winter Palace fail to surrender in response to the blank shot, then a bombardment would be begun by the artillery in the Peter and Paul fortress. The red lantern was a signal to the artillerymen of the "Aurora," the blank shot of the "Aurora" a signal to the artillerymen in the fortress. In this case the signal had a specific technical meaning comprehensible to those for whom it was intended.

From the nature of the matter it is obvious that the method of signaling must be as simple as possible, and easy to achieve technically. The instruments for the signal must be directly within the reach of the leaders. Lighting a red lantern is a very different thing from setting fire to the Reichstag. Is it conceivable that anyone could count upon the possibility that the Reichstag could be set on fire at whatever moment might be required, and that the flames would not be extinguished immediately, but would succeed in spreading? An undertaking of this sort is bound up with too great a quantity of unknowns to make possible its selection as an ordinary "signal."

Let us, however, admit—for reasons which do not occur to us and which up to now no one has even thought of explaining—that the Communist commanders did decide to announce the hour of attack by means of a gigantic conflagration in the heart of the capital. To gain its ends, in any case, the central staff must have issued instructions to the regional staffs that they take possession of the streets with arms in hand just as soon as the dome of the Reichstag burst into flames. Very many people must have been initiated beforehand into the secret of the fire. In general, such a colossal signal as a parliamentary building in flames could have been intended not for a handful—a telephone would have sufficed for them—but for thousands, if not tens and hundreds of thousands.

Why, then, is this most important aspect of the case completely submerged in the court shadows? Since the time of the fire tens of thousands have managed to desert from the ranks of the Communist party to the Nazis, in order to escape the terror. Such turncoats have figured in the trial as chief witnesses for the prosecution. In several concentration camps the majority of the prisoners voted for Hitler. If from among these "repenters" there have not been found witnesses—not hundreds or thousands but even isolated individuals—to disclose in court the secret of the signal, then this is irrefutable evidence that there was no such secret. The conclusion is clear: a signal concerning which no one knows anything is no signal. The flaming

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dome of the Reichstag proclaimed nothing and issued a call for nothing.

But perhaps the matter involves not a technical but, so to speak, a "spiritual" signal? The task of the incendiaries, the prosecutor will say, was to deal a bold offensive blow that would uplift the mood of the masses and impel them to the road of insurrection. In other words, the fire was not a signal in the real meaning of the word but an act of revolutionary terrorism. However, this version cannot withstand the breath of criticism either. If at least a Nazi headquarters, or, say, a police prefecture, were involved, then setting fire to the building might have had a semblance of political meaning—provided, of course, the act had been accompanied by other aggressive actions prepared in advance. But the burning of a "neutral" building like the Reichstag, open to all parties, could say absolutely nothing to the masses. In fact, a fire might well have originated accidentally. How and why should a red glare over the dome of the Reichstag invoke in the masses an arbitrary association with the idea of immediate insurrection?

In planning any action, a terrorist party such as, for example, the Russian Social-Revolutionaries in the era of Tsarism, is mainly concerned with making its blow as clear and attractive to the national masses as possible. Even prior to the terrorist act, the party would issue manifestos by means of which it would seek to center the hatred of the populace upon a given person or institution. The act itself would be accompanied by the publication of proclamations explaining its revolutionary meaning. We do not find a single one of these necessary conditions of political terrorism in Berlin toward the end of February. During those days the Communists were busy agitating in favor of elections to the Reichstag, and not at all in favor of burning it. Neither on the night of the fire nor subsequently did there appear in Germany a single proclamation explaining to the masses the meaning of this mysterious event. Small wonder that with the exception of Göring and his agents no one has interpreted the fire as a signal for insurrection.

Ignoring the very nature of political terrorism, the prosecutor asserts that the Communist party, like all criminals in general, naturally seeks to hide its participation in the crime. One could maintain with equal success that Herostratus, intending to immortalize himself by burning the temple at Ephesus, sought at the same time to hide his name in order to escape the responsibility for arson. Since no organization openly assumes the responsibility for the work of destruction, explains its meaning and calls the masses to action, there remains only the charred hall of sessions—but the political act disappears. In its irrational zeal, the prosecution tears a political trial out of its political axis. An insurrectionary staff could no more give the national masses an anonymous signal for insurrection than a government could declare war anonymously. A revolutionary party prepared to go out on the streets for the armed overthrow of the existing system would not shy away from assuming the responsibility for a few burned desks and rugs, should these be necessary in the course of insurrection.

Here we naturally come to consider the persons held as "incendiaries." They are five: an unemployed Dutchman, the chairman of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, and three Bulgarian Communists. The first question that arises is why was the signal for the uprising of German workers given by four foreigners? A witness for the prosecution sought to provide an explanation to this enigma by stating that the Communist party wished to "distract attention away from itself" by putting foreigners to the front. Once again we meet with the same absurdity: a party which for the aims of insurrection should have concentrated the attention of the masses upon itself was busy "distracting attention away from itself." But if the aim was to hide participation, after perpetrating a politically anonymous and therefore aimless fire, then how and why did the chairman of the Communist fraction—*i.e.*, the most outstanding and responsible representative of the party within the walls of the Reichstag—come to be involved in it, and, moreover, not as one of the political leaders of an act of terrorism but as a direct incendiary?

Still more astounding, if that is possible, is Dimitroff's alleged participation in the fire—Dimitroff who is an old revolutionist and who was the General Secretary of the Bulgarian trade unions as early as 1910, when the author of these lines first met him in Sofia. According to his testimony in court, Dimitroff settled in Berlin in order to devote himself with greater convenience to Bulgarian matters; and precisely because of this, he avoided any kind of connection with the activities of the German Communist party. Even his enemies have no reason to doubt his word. It is not difficult to understand that a responsible politician, directing from Berlin the work of his party in Bulgaria, would not incur the risk of arrest and exile for the sake of a second-rate participation in German affairs. For Bulgaria Dimitroff was unique; for Germany he could only be one among many. But even if this irrefutable consideration were left aside, the question would still remain why the German Communist party could find no assistant for van der Lubbe other than a member of the presidium of the Communist International. Moreover, Dimitroff's participation might perhaps have been explicable if the aim was not to "distract attention away from the party," but on the contrary to show that the fire was the work of the entire Communist International as a whole. Since Dimitroff, together with the other two Bulgarians, had arrived in Germany from Moscow, their participation in the Reichstag fire would, at the same time, have served to reveal the hand of the Soviets to the whole world. Even assuming that someone required such a demonstration, it could not have been, in any

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case, either the German Communists or Moscow. Why then did the choice fall upon Dimitroff? And whose choosing was it? From the standpoint of the political ends of the trial, it must be conceded that this was the worst possible choice.

In the hands of the organizers of this trial there were exceptional methods of staging—an unlimited supply of witnesses for the prosecution ready to testify to anything ordered; panic among the potential witnesses for the defense; the complete absence of criticism on the part of the press; and a complete subservience of the police, the prosecutors, the judges and even the attorneys for the defense to the orders of the rulers. It might appear that the success of any indictment would be assured beforehand under such conditions. Nevertheless the trial has entered its third "political" phase as a cause lost by Hitler. The key to the riddle is simple: the Communist party of Germany did not take to the road of insurrection. It was not wrecked in battle, like the Paris Commune in 1871, or the Russian proletariat in 1905; it turned out to be incapable of struggle. Discounting its purely symbolic call for a "General Strike"—a printed scrap of paper to which not a single man responded—the Communist party was and remained a passive object throughout the tragic events that changed the face of Germany. Let him who still doubts this read the letter of Maria Reese, the popular Communist deputy in the Reichstag who broke with her party precisely because it was revealed to be powerless not only to assume the offensive but to wage a defensive struggle; because it could not foresee anything, was unable to prepare for anything, and had neither the resources nor reasons for giving revolutionary signals to the masses.

If in its place there had been another party capable of assuming the defensive, it would have had a choice of different ways and methods of struggle, but none of them would have led through the burning of the Reichstag. And if, contrary to all sound political sense, a revolutionary party did decide to set fire to the Reichstag, it would not have chosen for this work a mysterious unemployed Dutchman who could only understand one with difficulty and upon whom no dependence could be placed; nor the chairman of a parliamentary fraction always in the public eye; nor a member of the presidium of the Communist International personifying Moscow; nor two young Bulgarians unable to speak German. Finally, if a Communist party had set fire to the Reichstag through the medium of such a fantastic group of incendiaries, it would at least have explained to the workers the political meaning of this arson. No testimony of witnesses, no "clues," no curses by Göring, are capable of sustaining the internal political insufficiency of this accusation. Let the prosecutor assert with the brazenness that distinguishes him in this brazen trial: *it was so.* The impregnable logic of politics replies in refutation: *it could not have been!*

LEON TROTSKY.

The Religion of Art

I: *Readings from the Lives of the Saints*

PEOPLE who read books without writing them are likely to form a simple picture of any celebrated author. He is John X or Jonathan Y, the man who wrote such a fascinating novel about Paris, about divorce, about the Georgia Crackers—the man who drinks, who ran off with the doctor's wife—the bald-headed man who lectured to the Wednesday Club. But to writers, especially to young writers in search of guidance, the established author presents a much more complicated image, and one that is assembled from many sources. His books are indeed a principal source, but there is also to be considered his career, the point from which it started, the direction in which it seems to be moving. There is his personality as revealed in chance interviews or caricatured in gossip; there are the values he assigns to other writers; and there is the value placed on himself by his younger colleagues in those kitchen or barroom gatherings at which they pass judgment with the harsh finality of a Supreme Court—John X has got real stuff, they say, but Jonathan Y is terrible—and they bring forward evidence to support these verdicts. The evidence is mulled over, all the details are fitted together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, until they begin to form a picture, vague and broken at first, then growing more distinct as the years pass by: the X or Y picture, the James Joyce, Paul Valéry or T. S. Eliot picture. But it is not so much a picture when completed: it is rather a map or diagram which the apprentice will use in planning his own career.

To American writers of my own age, or at any rate to those who joined the great exodus to France in 1921, the author who seemed nearest to themselves was T. S. Eliot. Essentially the picture he then presented was that of the local-boy-makes-good. He was born in St. Louis; he was graduated from Harvard, where he took courses that any of us might have taken, and managed to belong to three or four undistinguished clubs; he continued his

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studies at a French provincial university and got a job in London—now, ten years after leaving college, he was winding himself in a slow cocoon of glory. But his glory, his making-good, was not in the vulgar sense of making money, making a popular reputation: in 1921 the newspapers had never heard of this clerk in Barclay's Bank. His achievement was the writing of perfect poems, poems in which we could not find a line that betrayed immaturity, awkwardness, provincialism or platitude. Might a Middle Western boy become a flawless poet?—this was a question with which we could not fail to be preoccupied.

But it was not the only question that Eliot answered, nor the only door by which he entered our secret minds. His early critical writings were concerned in large part with the dispute between form and matter, and he aligned himself with what we had learned to call our side of it. He effectively defended the intellect against the emotions, and the conscious mind against the libido, the dark Freudian wish. His poems, from the first, were admirably constructed. He seemed to regard them, moreover, as intellectual problems—having solved one problem, he devoted himself to another. From his early sketches in free verse, he moved on to "Portrait of a Lady" and "Prufrock"; thence he moved on to his Sweeney poems, thence to "Gerontion"; and it was certain that his new ambitious work soon to be published in The Dial would mark another departure. For he never repeated himself and never, in those days, persisted in any attitude or technique: once having suggested its possibilities, he moved on. It was not Eliot who originated the idea of "moving on," but he rendered it vastly popular with young writers. They began to picture the ideal poet as an explorer, a buffalo hunter pressing westward toward new frontiers—from the Shenandoah he marches into unknown Tennessee, thence into the Blue Grass, then into Missouri, always leaving the land untilled behind him, but who cares?—there will be disciples to follow the plow. No other American poet had so many disciples as Eliot, in so many stages of his career. Until 1925, his influence seemed omnipresent, and it continued to be important in the years that followed. But in 1922, at the moment when he was least known to the general public and most fervently worshiped by young poets, there had been a sudden crisis. More than half of his original disciples began slowly to drop away.

When "The Waste Land" first appeared, we were confronted with a dilemma. Here was a poem which agreed with all our recipes and prescriptions of what a great modern poem should be. Its form was not only perfect but was far richer musically and architecturally than that of Eliot's earlier verse. Its diction was superb. It employed in a magisterial fashion the technical discoveries made by the great French writers who followed Baudelaire. We were prepared fervently to defend it against the attacks of all the people who didn't understand what Eliot was trying to do—but we made private reservations. The poem had forced us into a false position, had brought our consciously adopted principles into conflict with our instincts. At heart we didn't like it; we didn't agree with the idea which it set forth.

The idea is simple enough. Beneath the rich symbolism of "The Waste Land," the wide learning expressed in seven languages, the actions conducted on three planes, the musical episodes, the geometrical structure—beneath and by means of all this, the poet is saying that the present is inferior to the past. The past was dignified; the present is barren of emotion. The past was a landscape nourished by living fountains; now the fountains of spiritual grace are dry. Eliot had often suggested this in his earlier poems, where symbols of dead glory—the Roman eagles and trumpets, the Lion of St. Mark—were used to emphasize the vulgarities and hesitations of the present. This time, however, he had not only expressed the idea with all his mature resources: he had carried it to a new extreme. By continually quoting the phrases of dead poets, he seemed to be saying that our own age had reached a stage of enfeeblement at which it could not even find words to bewail its infertility.

But the truth was that the poet had not changed so much as we ourselves had changed. We were becoming less preoccupied with technique. In the midst of poems admirable in structure, we were groping for those which presented our own picture of the world. Were the values of past ages superior or inferior to present values? This was a question on which we could bring no objective evidence to bear. Values are created by living men. If they believe—if their manner of life induces them to believe—that greatness died with Virgil, Napoleon or Dante, who can change their opinion? It happened that we were excited by the adventure of living in the present, and that Mr. Eliot's subjective truth was not our own.

I say "it happened," although, as a matter of fact, our beliefs were inevitable. I say "we" when I can refer only to a majority, at best two-thirds, of those already influenced by T. S. Eliot. The publication of "The Waste Land" made visible a social division among writers which was not a division between capitalist and proletarian. In reality there were very few writers of my age whose parents were factory workers or slum dwellers—and these few, having received the education of the middle class, had for the most part adopted its standards. The middle class was beginning to dominate the profession of letters; the dominant educational background was that of the public high school and the big Middle Western university. To most writers of this class, which is roughly equivalent to Marx's "petty bourgeoisie," "The Waste Land" seemed alien. But there were also many young writers who had graduated from good preparatory schools, usually Episcopalian, before attending Yale, Harvard or Princeton, Williams or Amherst. They had received, in other words, the training of the small

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American owning and ruling class, the bourgeoisie proper. These, in general, were the "young poets old before their time" who not only admired "The Waste Land" but insisted on dwelling there; who, as Edmund Wilson says, "took to inhabiting exclusively barren beaches, cactus-grown deserts and dusty attics overrun with rats"—their special education, their social environment and also, I think, their class feeling of mingled power and insecurity had prepared them to follow T. S. Eliot in his desert wanderings toward a goal that must have been visible to others before he saw it himself.

There were many exceptions in both groups. Eliot continued to be admired in garrets and violently attacked by many writers of the class to which he would shortly proclaim his allegiance. But it slowly became evident that writers and their theories were moving toward two extremes (though few would reach either one or the other). The first extreme was that of authority and divinely inspired tradition as represented by the Catholic Church; the second was Communism. In Paris, in the year 1922, we were forced by Eliot to make a preliminary choice. Though we did not see our path, we instinctively rejected his. In the future we should continue to honor Eliot's poems, and the clearness, the integrity of his prose, but the Eliot picture had ceased to be our guide.

James Joyce also presented us with a picture of the writer who never repeats himself. From "Chamber Music" through "Dubliners" and "A Portrait of the Artist," each of his books had approached a new problem, had definitely ended a stage of his career. "Ulysses," published in the winter of 1921-22, marked yet another stage. Although we had not time in the busy year that followed to read it carefully or digest more than a tenth of it, still we were certain of one thing: it was a book which could, without abusing the word, be called "great."

Like T. S. Eliot, Joyce had become a success picture to fire the imagination of young writers, but the success was on a different plane. He was another local-boy-makes-good, but not a St. Louis boy nor a Harvard boy. His birthplace was the lower middle class; his home, above which he seemed to have soared, was the twentieth century. Can a writer of our own time produce a masterpiece fit to compare with those of other ages? Joyce was the first indication that the question had another answer than the one we had learned in school.

Pride, contempt, ambition: these were the three qualities that disengaged themselves from all his writings. Toward the end of "A Portrait of the Artist" they stand forth most clearly. The hero, Stephen Dedalus, is lonely and overweening in his pride; he despises the rabble of his richer schoolmates for being his inferiors in sensibility and intellect; and he sets for himself the ambition, not of becoming a mere bishop, judge or general, but of pressing into his arms "the loveliness that has not yet come into the world." He will be the spiritual leader standing alone; he leaves Ireland "to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race." Stephen Dedalus is a more or less accurate picture of Joyce himself; but in life the author chose a still lonelier ambition. As he wandered through Italy, Austria and France, he continued to write about the Dublin of his youth and remember the sound of Irish voices, but he half-forgot that Irish race whose conscience was still to be forged. Like Napoleon landing from Corsica, like Cortez or Pizarro marching into the highlands, he set himself a task of self-aggrandizement: he would be a genius!—he would carve out an empire, create a work of genius.

The intellectual resources at his command were not superhuman, and material resources were almost totally absent. He came of a family that had decayed with Ireland; during his early manhood he was poor, desperately poor and unpopular. He was unusually sensitive, but no more so than half a dozen other Irish poets; he had a mind equaled in nimbleness by some of his Jesuit instructors; he had great learning of a type not impossible for any diligent student to acquire. But he was patient, obstinate—having set himself a task, he was willing to disregard all difficulties; he was a foreigner, penniless, in frail health; Europe was crumbling about his ears, thirteen million men died in the trenches, empires toppled over; he shut his window and worked on, sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, writing, polishing, elaborating. There was nothing mysterious in what he accomplished. He had pride, contempt, ambition—and these are the qualities which continue to stand forth clearly from "Ulysses." Here once more is the pride of Stephen Dedalus that raises itself above the Dublin public and especially above the Dublin intellectual public as represented by Buck Mulligan; here is the author's contempt for the world and for his readers—like a host being deliberately rude to his guests, he makes no concession to their capacity for attention or their power of understanding; and here is an ambition willing to measure itself, not against any novelist of its age, not against any writer belonging to a modern national literature, but with the arch-poet of the European race.

And now this poor boy from the twentieth century had conquered his Peru and created his work of genius. We were not among the enthusiasts who placed him beside Homer, but this at least was certain: except for Marcel Proust there was no living author to be compared with him in depth, richness, complexity or scope. His literary career was an example for younger writers; his ambition dignified our lesser ambitions. But obviously he had written "Ulysses" at a price—just how much had he paid in terms of bread and laughter? How did a man live who had written a masterpiece?

We fitted together passages from his books with information collected from magazine articles about him, bits of café gossip and the remarks of people allowed to meet him. The resulting picture, the Joyce picture of 1923, was not wholly pleasant. The

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great man lived in a cheap hotel, not picturesquely sordid, but cluttered and depressing. He was threatened with Homeric blindness, and much of his meager income was spent on doctors; for the disease from which he suffered was aggravated by hypochondria. He had no companions of his own intellectual stature, and associated either with family friends or else with admiring disciples. Except in matters concerning literature and the opera, his opinions were those of a fourth or fifth-rate mind. He cherished the sort of mean superstitions which great men share with washerwomen. It was as if he had starved everything else in his life to feed his ambition. It was as if he had made an inverted Faust's bargain, selling youth, riches and part of his common humanity to advance his pride of soul.

Having been granted an interview, I went to his hotel. He was waiting for me in a room that looked sour and moldy, as if the red-plush furniture had fermented in the twilight behind closed shutters. I saw a tall man with a very high white forehead and smoked glasses; on his thin mouth and at the puckered corners of his eyes was a look of suffering so plainly marked that I forgot the questions with which I had come prepared. I was simply a younger person meeting an older person who needed help. "Is there anything I can do for you, Mr. Joyce?" Yes, there was something I could do: he had no stamps, the nearest post office was some distance away, and there was nobody to run errands for him. I went out to buy stamps. He had achieved genius, I thought, but there was something about that genius as inhuman and cold as the touch at parting of his long, cold, wet-marble fingers.

In 1921, Paul Valéry was fifty years old and had recently entered his second career, one which would shortly carry him to the French Academy. His first literary career, which began some thirty years before, had been brilliant and very brief. And it was his abandonment of this career, his deliberate, twenty-year-long refusal to write for publication, which affected us even more than the poems and noble essays he had printed since he had consented once more to be a writer like anybody else.

Coming to Paris in the autumn of 1892, a boy from the provinces with his road to make, he had attached himself to the circle of Symbolist poets surrounding Stéphane Mallarmé. Later he said of that era, "There was a certain austerity about the new generation of poets. . . . In the profound and scrupulous worship of all the arts, they thought to have found a discipline, and perhaps a truth, beyond the reach of doubt. A kind of religion was very nearly established." And again: "More fervor, courage and learning, more researches into theory, more disputes and a more pious attention, have rarely been devoted, in so short a time, to the problem of pure beauty. One might say that the problem was attacked from all sides." Valéry himself chose the intellectual side. His ambition resembled that of T. S. Eliot's early days: he was obsessed by the idea of always moving through and "going beyond." Each poem could be translated into a problem capable of solution, capable of supplying a principle which could then be applied to the writing of other poems. But why bother to write them? "From the moment," Valéry said to himself, "that a principle has been recognized and grasped by someone, it is quite useless to waste one's time applying it." Always he was driven further, to attack new problems, discover new principles. And, at a certain point in the process, it became evident that literature itself was a problem capable of solution, and was therefore only an intermediate goal, a stage to be passed through and left behind. The poet was free to abandon poetry.

The starting point of Valéry's new researches, his first great problem outside the field of literature, was to recreate the mind of "the universal man," to discover the *method* that unified the extremely varied accomplishments in science, warfare, mechanics and the arts of a genius like Leonardo da Vinci. His essay on Leonardo, written two or three years before his great renunciation, is a magnificent defense of the conscious mind, and of "the poet of the hypothesis" as against the specialized poet of quatrains or the patient accumulator of facts. It proposes also a new type of ambition—might we not, by discovering his method, produce a new Leonardo able to work freely with the infinitely rich materials of the present?—but no, Valéry seems to say, it would be useless to put the method into action. *To act,* for any individual of the first magnitude, is only an exercise, and one which may end by impoverishing the mind, since it is equivalent to choosing a single possibility and rejecting all the others with which the mind is teeming. Even "the universal man" becomes a problem capable of being reduced to a principle, to something which "it is quite useless to waste one's time applying." Once more, relentlessly, Valéry moved on.

He moved on, during his years of silence, to what he now regarded as the most universal and difficult problem, "the study of the self for its own sake." But it soon became evident that this ultimate problem is capable of further refinement. Within the "self," what is the universal and changeless principle? It cannot be the body, which changes daily, or the senses, which tempt and deceive, or the mind, in which memories fade and ideas are dissipated; it cannot even be our *personality,* which we thoughtlessly mistake for our inmost essence—even the personality is only a *thing* which can be observed and reduced to graphs and statistics. No, underneath all these is something else, the *I,* the naked ego, an entity which can be reduced to consciousness alone, to consciousness in its most abstract state. "This profound *tone* of our existence, as soon as it is heard, dominates all the complicated conditions and varieties of existence. To isolate this substantial attention from the strife of ordinary verities—is this not the ultimate and hidden task of the man with the greatest mind?"

Such was the ambition, the path and the goal which Paul Valéry proposed to the young writers

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who followed him after an interval of thirty years. They should regard poetry only as the beginning of their problems. Having mastered and abandoned it, they should move onwards to the methods of poetry, thence to methods in general (and in particular the methods of genius), thence to the universal self that determines all methods, and thence to mere consciousness, which is the only unchanging element in the self. Having reached this point, still undeterred by the terrors of the way, they will discover that consciousness is a perpetual process of detachment from all things, from all emotions and sensations. All pride must be immolated. "The man," Valéry says, "who is led by the demands of the indefatigable mind to this contact with living shadows and this extreme of pure presence, perceives himself as destitute and bare, reduced to the supreme poverty of being a force without an object. . . . He exists without instincts, almost without images; and he no longer has an aim. He resembles nothing. I say *man,* and I say *he,* by analogy and through lack of words." The supreme genius has ceased even to be human.

But this perfected consciousness, which "differs from nothingness by the smallest possible of margins," is not merely a goal and an abstraction. Like all ideals, it is something to be embodied in a man who eats, lives and suffers. In "An Evening with M. Teste," almost the only work he wrote for publication during his long retirement, Valéry performed this labor of incarnation. M. Teste, "Mr. Head," is the thinking man, the modern Leonardo, and he is an almost wholly dehumanized creature. He does nothing, desires nothing, occupies no position, is almost completely cut off from society. At night, when he retires to his chamber, he is left alone with three realities: thought, sleeplessness and migraine. He suffers from incurable headaches.—And why, we asked when reading the story, does genius lead to this inhuman state in which suffering is the only reality? James Joyce's blindness, Proust's asthma (no less real for being half-imaginary), even T. S. Eliot's reiterated complaint of being "an old man in a dry season"—all these seemed to have something in common, seemed to indicate that genius had its own pathology, seemed to possess a symbolic value, as if life were taking revenge on these men for being eliminated from their calculations. They were the great writers of our time, and they resembled one another in proposing a future as cold as the touch of cold hands. We turned aside from them to wonder what the writers of our own age were doing in France—they were younger and more fallible, but they might also be warmer and nearer to ourselves.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

This is the first of three articles. In the second, Mr. Cowley will tell the story of the Dada movement.—THE EDITORS.

A New Deal for the Consumer?

AMERICAN life has developed horizontally rather than vertically. The distracting presence of new frontiers has encouraged the capturing of new opportunities rather than the development of those we already have. This has given rise to one of the most subtly pervasive aspects of our relatively rootless American culture: the wide tolerance for obvious contradictions in the ways in which our institutions work. The present impasse, which we call the depression, is directly related to our resulting tendency to try to play the same game by several unrelated sets of rules.

Thus our economic game is played synchronously under three sets of rules: rules for production, *and* rules for distribution, *and* rules for consumption. The federal government has traditionally facilitated the rules of the productive game, on the dubious assumption that fat cards in industry's hand would automatically ensure fat winnings for retailers and consumers. More recently it has moved to coördinate somewhat the rules under which producers and distributors play. But until the present emergency it has left the consumer very largely alone to play his dog-eared cards under rules in which the deuces have been erratically "wild."

Whatever else the industrial crack-up of 1929 and the recovery machinery of 1933 may mean for American life, they bid fair to become a landmark as regards the status of the consumer. The recovery machinery officially recognizes for the first time that the consumer is sitting in on the game, and that rules and procedures built up over decades of federal coaching to help business do not automatically afford equal aid to the consumer across the table.

The consumer's difficulty is that when he buys he has no sure way of knowing whether he is getting what he wants or needs. He lacks technically defined grades and standards to enable him to buy effectively. This disability has increased steadily in recent generations with the multiplication of alternative choices, the increasingly elaborate fabrication of commodities, the rise of new synthetic materials, of complex scientific devices such as vacuum cleaners, and of scientific ingredients such as vitamins and ultra-violet rays, the use of frequently deceptive packaging, and the multiplication of brands backed by slogan-advertising. The rise of industry has been accompanied by a corresponding decline in the homely thumb-and-finger familiarity with the far fewer and simpler commodities

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which earlier generations used. A modern mail-order catalogue contains 50,000 to 60,000 genuine choices. A survey of the buying habits of 5,000 Milwaukee families in 1930 showed them to be buying 46 kinds of flour, 101 kinds of packaged coffee, 256 kinds of tooth brushes, 110 kinds of washing machines, 164 kinds of fountain pens, 51 kinds of motor oil—and so on through the list of things people must buy. Fifty-three billion dollars, or roughly 60 percent of our national income, flowed over the retail counters in 1929 in the fumbling efforts of our people to choose from this stupendous array of alternative goods.

Faced with this same congeries of alternatives, government, industry and large merchandising units have adopted the procedure of calling in the Bureau of Standards and other technical agents to set up scientific specifications and grades in terms of required use conditions. The government's saving is estimated at $100 million a year as a result, the Bell Telephone System saves $50,000 a year on the purchase of $150,000 worth of lead pencils, while the Association of American Colleges found that "by changing the specifications on tennis nets, the life of the nets would be doubled, and the cost reduced from $36 a dozen to $16.50 a dozen."

It is through the obvious and too long neglected device of developing usable standards and grades for commodities purchased at retail that the New Deal machinery is making one of its most important contributions to the needs of the consumer. It has moved to this end not through any desire to stereotype consumer demands, but to give those demands effective expression. Such aid to the consumer is implicit in the central aims of the recovery administration. The industrial codes of fair competition necessitate the definition of quality, since modern business competition is notably in terms of quality as well as price. The effective stabilization of industry, moreover, requires the elimination of substandard "chiselers" and the concentration of buying power behind reputable producers. Furthermore, our 30 million families operating on reduced incomes need all possible protection from the avoidable wastes of mistaken, substandard buying if they are to maintain, in the difficult years that lie ahead, even an approximation of a tolerable American standard of living. In good times the United States has spent more than $8 million a year on simplification and standardization. The overwhelming bulk of this sum has gone into the standardization of producers' goods, for the simple reason that private personnel and laboratories have been heavily subsidized by industry to improve its competitive position, while even such a national agency as the Bureau of Standards has operated, to quote one of its bulletins, as "the agency of the Department of Commerce for research and testing for the industries." While such industrial standardization has benefited the consumer indirectly, standards and grades are not yet meeting consumer use-needs nor are labels couched in thoroughly intelligible terms. The history of the American standardization movement has made it amply apparent that the consumer cannot look to industry or to industry-supported technical bodies for the development of any substantial volume of genuine consumer standards, and the current massed attack by industry on the proposed new Food and Drug bill serves to underscore this point.

The work of the emergency administrations in this direction is taking the form, to date, of two types of procedure: the introduction of consumer standards into some of the codes, notably the industry agreements of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and the development of a plan, as yet still in its preliminary stages, for the establishment of a permanent Consumer Standards Board.

Nowhere has the essentially different focus of the N.R.A. and of the A.A.A. been more apparent than in their treatment of consumer standards in their code drafting. The N.R.A. drive is a recovery expedient aimed at getting the old bus back on the road and humming along profitably as in the past. It is no secret that some of the most powerful leaders of the N.R.A. have regarded the Consumers' Board as an annoying and unnecessary fifth wheel calculated to slow up the recovery procession. In the pressure to get the industries lined up behind the band wagon, most of the questions from the consumers' representatives have been regarded as rather an impertinence. In the face of such active discouragement from above, and starting from a position in the N.R.A. subcellar with no organized backing such as industry and labor have, the Consumers' Board has worked steadily forward, bringing in economists to make special studies such as its model brief against price-fixing in the oil industry, and technical purchasing agents and representatives of the Federal Trade Commission to aid in the code hearings, and recommending the inclusion of quality standards in the codes.

In the A.A.A. the situation has been almost reversed. There has been a strong sentiment in favor of consumer standards among certain leading officials, and the open break between Secretary Wallace and George N. Peek, Agricultural Adjustment Administrator, culminating in the recent resignation of the latter, has been precipitated in part by the issue of commodity standards in the industry agreements. The A.A.A. has rejected codes repeatedly when they lacked adequate standards and has drawn up a highly explicit series of requirements as to standards and labeling which it is systematically forcing into its industry agreements, reserving to the Secretary of Agriculture the power to insert adequate standards, as soon as the Department can develop them, in cases where such food standards are not now available. In other words, the A.A.A. is taking literally the conception of the partnership of industrial ownership—labor and the consumer in industry—and the fiduciary role of the business man. The life of the A.A.A. is not limited in time by law, as is the N.R.A.; hence the A.A.A. is taking its time in preparing for the long haul. This has not

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unnaturally given the packers and food processors a headache as they have watched their brethren jamming their way through the N.R.A. turnstiles. The clarification which has come into the A.A.A. situation in the last two weeks, while unlikely to deflect the leaders of the N.R.A., means a strengthening of the whole status of consumer standards in Washington. While the victory for the liberal group in agriculture has been gained at the cost of the transfer of some one hundred agricultural codes to the N.R.A., the basic codes covering first processing, such as the important packers' and canners' codes, remain under agriculture and bid fair to become models to which it is to be hoped that the N.R.A. codes will be forced eventually to approximate.

The second substantial move in the direction of consumer standards came during the past fortnight in the completion of the report of the Committee on Consumer Standards of the Consumers' Board of the N.R.A. This report recommends the setting up of a Consumer Standards Board under the joint control of the Consumers' Board of the N.R.A. and of the Consumers' Counsel of the A.A.A., with a technical director and technical staff of commodity experts, an inter-departmental advisory committee drawn from the federal bureaus, and funds for the badly needed basic research and testing at the Bureau of Standards and at other specially equipped laboratories inside and outside the government.

It is too early to predict just how substantial the ultimate gains will be. In the Senate hearings on the new Food and Drug bill on December 8, the charge was made by opponents of the bill that it would defeat the ends of the N.R.A. program. This assertion was answered at the hearings by a member of the Consumers' Board of the N.R.A. who pointed out that as Codes of Fair Competition these codes necessitate precisely the sort of quality definition, labeling and control over advertising which the Copeland bill contemplates if competition is to be fair either within industry or among producer, retailer and consumer. However, arguments against the legislation of standards likely to curb the income or activity of anybody now employing men, no matter how socially questionable his product, are likely to bear undue weight with those who hold the view that the N.R.A. exists solely to get men to work and set industry humming again. But it is a hopeful sign that the Labor Advisory Board, after persistent failure to interest itself in the major stake of its constituency as consumers, has recently joined with the Consumers' Board in recommending the inclusion of quality standards in the N.R.A. industry codes.

While the code procedure, save for the numerically small but important group of codes remaining under the A.A.A., is apparently side-slipping steadily to the right, it seems not too vain to expect that when the code procedure has shaken down, there will be in the federal administrative system a permanent consumer nucleus devoted to the development of standards and related services.

ROBERT S. LYND.

Washington Notes

Taming the Wild Congressmen—The Weapon of Patronage—Roosevelt's Balance of Power—National Emergency Council

THERE appears to be a general impression that the Congress, which will be in session in a very few days, far from being recalcitrant and hard to handle, may be quite as amenable to the administration guidance as it was last session. This is an interesting and, I think, significant change in feeling. A few weeks ago, members of Congress who drifted into this city were full of resentment and threats. They were going to do this, that and the other to the Roosevelt program when the time arrived. The N.R.A. and the A.A.A., the P.W.A. and the C.W.A. were all to be investigated. Incapacity was to be shown up and the President shorn of his dictatorial powers. Some of the Democratic Senators had worked themselves into a lather over what they then regarded as the "dangerous trend" of the New Deal. They seem to feel quite differently now. Nearly all the fire within them has evaporated and the doubts and fears with which they were afflicted appear to have been dissolved in favor of the President.

This does not mean there is anything like the enthusiastic, blind willingness to follow Mr. Roosevelt that characterized Congress last session. What it does mean is that a series of events and developments has convinced members of both House and Senate that the popular strength of Mr. Roosevelt is still such as to render him impervious to attack, and to make it politically unwise for men expecting shortly to run for renomination and reëlection to become conspicuously opposed. As all the members of the House and one-third of the Senators are exactly in this position, the recent evidences of the undiminished Roosevelt prestige have had their effect. One of the most impressive of these was the flatness of Smith's attack some weeks ago upon administration policies. Had Smith's criticisms struck a popular chord, there unquestionably would have been a more or less general barrage from various sections. The fact was, however, that the reaction generally was unfavorable to the ex-Governor, that he was at once put on the defensive by administration spokesmen, that the net result was to demonstrate exactly what the administration needed demonstrated—to wit, that there was a public demand for continuation of the program rather than abandonment of it.

So clear was this that the congressional critics, who were all prepared to follow Smith's lead, were completely discouraged from doing so. Added to this is the better feeling developed in these critics by the improvement in business and the efficiency with which, under Director Hopkins, the civil-works plan is taking men off the relief rolls and putting them to work. Also, the tremendous fury with which the inflation bugaboo was waved in Wall Street, which undoubtedly alarmed a lot of people, has markedly subsided. In the absence of any action, the noise could not be continued, and for the past two weeks there has been a rather marked lack of administration criticism. In the week before Christmas it had practically vanished altogether and, as this is written, the tone of members of Congress is decidedly conciliatory. A good many of them have been to

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the White House, talked with the President, come again under the influence of his personal charm, been soothed by his sympathetic words. Others have got promises of a better deal in the patronage business before the session is over. Still others have been placated through the Public Works Administration and the R.F.C. So much money is being poured out now through the various administration channels that it is an exceedingly greedy statesman who isn't satisfied.

Of course, there are a good many greedy statesmen, and there is among them a certain resentment over the hard-boiled attitude of Mr. Harold Ickes, Public Works Administrator, toward the well meaning lobbyists and the gentle grafters, several of whom he has, figuratively speaking, thrown through the window. On the whole, however, the belligerence that characterized so much of the talk from incoming Representatives and Senators a few weeks ago is conspicuously absent. A good many bills will be introduced offering amendments to the N.R.A., and the A.A.A., and there will be some fairly strong efforts to go beyond the White House wish in the matter of restoring veterans to the pay rolls and in the allocation of appropriations for relief and public works. But in the main, the feeling of those in the best position to judge is that no really important legislation of which the President disapproves will be enacted, at the coming session.

He may not get every administration bill through in the shape he wants it. That, perhaps, is too much to expect from Congress again, but he certainly will be able to prevent the enactment of any measure to which he is strongly opposed. In a word, any idea that the incoming Congress can or will do anything either in the way of abandoning, dismantling or slowing down any of the major experiments now under way is entirely unfounded. This is as true in the matter of the currency question as it is of any other. Beyond question, there is a formidable inflation sentiment in Congress, led by such men as Borah, on the Senate side, and Rainey in the House. It is even probable that there is in both branches a majority of members who believe in and want to take the more direct inflationary steps. But it is altogether improbable that this majority in either body could be mustered against the White House will, and completely impossible that a two-thirds vote to override the presidential veto could be obtained.

All one has to do to realize this is to look at the facts. Even if, on the issue of extreme inflation, Mr. Roosevelt should not get almost solid Republican support—which he would—he still could not be overridden if he did not get a single Republican vote. Once that basic truth is grasped, it will be much better appreciated that the determination of the currency question is wholly in the hands of the President. We will get the degree of inflation he chooses to give us. We will be stabilized at the point he decrees. In brief, we will take what he hands us—and like it. At least so it seems to the more or less impartial observers on this front at the moment. It may not be an altogether healthy state of affairs. It may be that such complete power is not a good thing for a man with Mr. Roosevelt's tendency to straddle, compromise and conciliate. It may be that the suppression of criticism and the discouragement of critics which characterize the present situation are not beneficial either to Mr. Roosevelt or the country.

Aside from this change of feeling about Congress, perhaps the most interesting thing that has happened in Washington this week is the enlargement of the membership and the extension of the authority by the President of the recently appointed National Emergency Council, of which Mr. Frank A. Walker is the chairman at $10,000 a year, and the heads of the various governmental agencies members. A few days ago it was announced that this Council, in addition to its coördinating and information-disseminating functions, would also be charged with "protecting the interests of the consumers under the recovery program." As a matter of fact, there is a suggestion that the new Council will exercise very considerable supervision over the whole N.R.A., that General Johnson's word in the future is not the last word, that the Emergency Council, of which he is, to be sure, a member, will have general control, with power to overrule him. It may not, it is agreed, be necessary to do this, but certainly it has been made very plain by the President that the Board has the authority, always subject to White House review. The announcement that the Council will exert itself in behalf of the consumer certainly seems to take that function from Johnson, though it may strengthen one of his best advertised adjuncts—the Consumers' Advisory Board. What else the new Council takes over in the way of decisions and activities remains to be seen.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Self-Regulation for the Stock Exchange—When the Devil Is Sick—Reorganization Committees—The Exchange Investigates

MAX LOWENTHAL, who mercilessly dissected railroad reorganizations in his book, "The Investor Pays," has now submitted to an equally ruthless analysis the pretension of the New York Stock Exchange that it is capable of protecting the public interest through self-regulation.

Old sins, we are continually assured, should be forgotten. The Exchange must be judged not by its follies and shortcomings in the old Coolidge days when men's minds and judgments were warped by the mania which was epidemic then, but in the light of the wisdom which has come to all of us since. It has signified its intention to revise its method of doing business. We should rely upon that, at least until the Exchange has had a chance.

Mr. Lowenthal insists the Exchange has had its chance. His conclusions are set out in a pamphlet, reprinted from The Columbia Law Review, entitled, "The Stock Exchange and Protective Committee Securities." In this calm and closely reasoned examination of his subject, Mr. Lowenthal scrutinizes the action of the Exchange in admitting to its listings the certificates of deposit of seven railroad reorganization committees. These listings are the work of the Exchange in 1933, after the devil had ceased to be well and become something of a monk.

Reorganizations of bankrupt or embarrassed corporations have been a scandal for many years. The practice has been almost uniform. As soon as a large corporation falls upon default, the bankers and insiders, who almost invariably

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have been responsible for the disaster, rush upon the prostrate carcass and assume possession of it. This they do, first, by getting their representatives named as receivers, and second, by organizing protective committees of stockholders and bondholders. These protective committees ostensibly keep an eye on the special interests of their respective groups of security holders. They exercise what in practice is more important, a controlling influence over the reorganization of the corporation. And as it is the reorganization of the corporation in which the promoters and bankers and insiders are chiefly interested, it is a matter of great importance to them to capture the control of these committees. Anyone who wants to know what grave abuses, what serious infractions of the simple laws of trust, have been practised by such committees has only to read Mr. Lowenthal's book, already referred to, which tells the story of the reorganization of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway.

These protective committees have become such a scandalous institution that finally, this year, Congress attempted to deal with the problem in the field of railroad reorganizations. The Interstate Commerce Commission, the Interstate Commerce Committee of the House, the debates in Congress on the subject and more than one *obiter dictum* of the Supreme Court have stigmatized this baleful practice as indefensible. With all of this, of course, the New York Stock Exchange is familiar.

Now, despite the passage of the legislation of this year to protect bondholders in railroad reorganizations, the same old practices by insiders to seize control of bankrupt railroads have gone forward in the same old way. The protective committees of insiders are formed. The bondholder is asked to make a deposit of his bonds in the old way with the committee. When the bonds are deposited, a certificate of deposit is issued to the bondholder evidencing his deposit. These certificates of deposit are then admitted to listing on the New York Stock Exchange, so that they may be traded in in the same way as are the bonds which they represent.

One of the most important functions of the Exchange is to decide what securities may be admitted to listing. The Exchange has declared that it can and does protect the public by closely scrutinizing all securities offered for listing. Some years ago it boasted that it had refused listing to non-voting stock because such stock was contrary to the public interest. The Exchange does not, as Mr. Lowenthal concedes, undertake to guarantee the securities which it lists for trading. But it does undertake to "ascertain whether the securities represent a legitimate business or governmental enterprise."

Mr. Lowenthal asks what the Exchange did to ascertain whether these certificates of deposit admitted to listing in the mourning and repentant year of 1933 represented a sound operation consistent with the public interest. The certificates represent the holdings of investors who have already suffered heavy losses. These certificates will lay upon the shoulders of these unfortunate investors another burden. A banker who took charge of a recent reorganization is quoted by Mr. Lowenthal as estimating that the charges would exceed three-quarters of a million dollars. The bondholders who get certificates of deposit for their bonds are dispossessed of their immediate and direct interest in the underlying property and the protective committee takes over their functions.

Mr. Lowenthal properly points out that these committees seldom if ever give their attention to the primary purpose of their existence, which is to insist that receivers press all claims against those who have managed or mismanaged the property and exercise continual surveillance over the conduct of trustees, receivers and adverse security holders. Instead, they limit their energies to the reorganization of the company. And this is the thing in which the bankers are most interested. Mr. Lowenthal examines the various alleged reasons for certificates of deposit and proves that the reasons are first of all inadequate, and second, purely invented excuses for the formation of agencies which can capture the rights of the bondholders and exercise them in the interest of bankers and promoters.

It might be supposed that the Stock Exchange, if it can be trusted to look after the public interest at all, would do so now when it is under fire, when it is threatened with drastic regulation by the government. Its failure, therefore, to attempt any sort of protection of the bondholder from the machinations of the much condemned protective committee; its actual collaboration with such committees to evade the plain intent of Congress by admitting these certificates of deposit to listing, is only one more evidence of the futility of that fragile hope that the Exchange will truly regulate itself. There is but one power which can regulate the Exchange and that is the federal government.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Toward a Theatre Art

IN THE last issue of The New Republic we carried an editorial on the Theatre Union and its first production, "Peace on Earth." With the sum of the editorial I agree emotionally and, on a certain general ground, essentially. But as a New Republic editor whose functions cover to a somewhat special extent the theatre, I feel a special responsibility; some comment should be made which will be on the theatre's behalf, and which may in one case endorse, in another depart from, the editorial. Otherwise, while some readers concerned with art might think the editorial oblivious to it, which it by no means meant to be, others concerned with social issues might think my brief review of two weeks ago indifferent to the things with which the play deals, which is not so.

The theatre, I need hardly say, is a form of expression that has proved itself ageless and indestructible in human life, which means that it has survived countless points of view, states of morality, causes, societies and so on. In the strictest sense, then, the point of the first paragraph of the editorial was important. An increase in national, religious, class or any other kind of consciousness brought to the theatre is a theatre gain, because it means that the audience has something for which it seeks an expression in art. As for the "united front," of which the editorial speaks, among people of various opinions, and in the audience as well as the Executive or Advisory Boards, it is obvious that in the theatre—the phrase, of course, comes from movements outside it—nothing could be more advantageous. Speaking from inside the art, however, it is

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necessary to say that, for example, while millions of people no doubt agree in being anti-war, a united front implies much more by way of what might be called mutual response and creation. And in any view of the theatre as long-lived, one production not many weeks old is not enough for conclusions. "Every shade of political opinion" is, no doubt, as the editorial said, represented among the 10,000 people who have seen "Peace on Earth"; "I'm No Angel" has had millions, of whom—merely to show how little the point counts—the same may be said.

As for the critics on the New York newspapers, let us take one of the lowest of them and set him alongside the lowest on the workers' press: strictly speaking, it is no poorer criticism for one of them to think "Peace on Earth" worse than it is because it bored him than for the other to think it better than it is because it agreed with him. I gathered from all sides that the first performance at the Theatre Union was very bad, and, since I had personally a more than common interest, and am the born friend of anyone with a sincere cause, I waited eight days before I saw the play. By then the whole had evidently improved, which is definitely a good sign for the future. It seems simpler merely to repeat my brief comment: "it need only be said, perhaps, that the whole effort was sincere [Sincerity is both a form of will and a quality of genius. From the will for it, derived a certain appeal among some of the Theatre Union players which took the place of acting], that the propaganda statement must either be confined to a special audience, or else developed into theatre that has created the simplicity of its themes into more powerful terms." For anyone who reads the language of art this is a comprehensive and fundamental—as well as kind—statement of the trouble with the Theatre Union's "Peace on Earth."

I know eight or ten of the dramatic critics on New York papers; whatever their faults may be, it was, I feel sure, the poor performance by the Theatre Union and so much material not yet converted into theatre, that they rejected. I myself—to be personal—urged one of the directors to hold back the production until it seemed to be in good shape. But anybody familiar with the theatre knows how finances, enthusiasms and friends, more endorsing than advised, may come into the situation. Something gets going which is not easy to control, as everybody knows who knows the theatre. Then what happens? A bad beginning, which gets roasted and hurts the whole enterprise. The better members face the facts with regret, courage or renewed resolutions; the poorer members, and some of the earnest backers, get up alibis for everything. Thus worse begins and bad remains behind. On the other hand, you can hardly expect newspaper reviewers, with so much on their hands, to keep coming over and over again to watch the enterprise improve. They, too, may be anti-war, but are too much occupied, whether worthily or not, for wet-nursing. People going some weeks later at their leisure should make note of the fact that what they see and what the critics saw may be quite different matters. To none of these men could there have been anything in "Peace on Earth" that we might call a "disturbing idea"; they must have heard everything in it many times or else been asleep these several years. What they had a right to ask was to hear and see this matter now in theatre terms.

Nor, speaking from the theatre, do I think we helped the cause editorially by bringing in Ibsen alongside Mr. Sklar and Mr. Maltz, or the London critics' "verbal missiles" as recorded by Shaw and Archer "for the enjoyment of future generations." Some of Shaw's endorsements have come to be regarded as quite as twisted and absurd as some of the attacks he ridiculed, and Archer's theatre writing has already dropped pretty short of even the present, much less the future. As for, "what every critic knows is that propaganda is out of place on the stage," we could hardly say that all newspaper critics are such fools as not to know that propaganda is one kind of material for a play, exactly as something else may be, and that the question is not whether the art is propaganda, but whether the propaganda is art (not is the violin a bit of wood, but is the bit of wood a violin?). Newspaper critics aside, I myself have said this over and over to the point of embarrassment. And these same critics again aside, I should say that of the two I have greater respect for "Peace on Earth" than I felt for "We, the People," which had more of a certain stage expertness but whose spirit convinced me less. In spite, then, of my not being able to endorse, as theatre or as esthetics, that paragraph of the editorial as it stands written, I am easily at one with its spirit: (a) New substance, new content, is always to be preferred to mere technical facility in stale stuff, though we must remember that content exists only in so far as it achieves form, and that outside endorsement or defense, though it may stimulate the effort, cannot force this achievement. (b) Propaganda can be one source of great art. All art is ultimately propaganda that we may have life and have it more abundantly.

"Peace on Earth," despite its poverty in the sense of word and rhythm, got along pretty well up to and through the dock scene, when the strikers stop the loading of munitions. After that it scattered. The series of expressionistic devices was not effective. Once German, then Mr. John Howard Lawson, then Provincetown Playhouse and so on, they are now, unless some fresh imaginative use is made of them, merely pat and stale. However, where the spectator is a worker without money who has not had the chance, or a person with money who has not had the interest, to have seen these devices already *ad nauseam*, they may seem more significant. "Peace on Earth" has one genuinely creative item; it appears in the dock scene, where the theme that the workers of the world could stop war if they prevented the transport (the manufacture as well) of munitions is embodied in stage terms. This is not merely an idea, it is a dramatic image created to embody the idea. If the dramatists throughout their play could have given more of its themes and raw statements a like degree of creation, "Peace on Earth" would be quite another matter —I only wish it had been. And wishing thus (and speaking again from the theatre), I can see no harm in bringing such high perennial matters as are implied in the editorial's last paragraph to bear on the Theatre Union, if by doing so something is gained for its support. In the face of such glorious allusions as Periclean, Elizabethan and the rest, it may be hard for the reader, but he must try to isolate the social basis intended. Otherwise the comparative splendors aroused may do the Theatre Union anything but a friendly turn.

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JEZEBEL

This new play of Mr. Owen Davis', at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre, tells the story of Julie Kendrick, who after three years from Twin Oaks Plantation, has returned to humble herself before Preston, her mistreated cousin and lover. Along with the other guests Preston comes, bringing, to Julie's surprise, a wife from the North. From then on the play is a question of Julie's revenge. She strives to bring about a duel between Preston, who loves her still, and a famous duelist, Buck Buckner. Preston's younger brother intervenes with a challenge to Buck, whom he kills. Eventually the visitors and Julie's aunt are seen leaving the house; in their opinion nothing can excuse Julie's action. At this point yellow fever appears on the plantation and strikes down Preston. Julie nurses him, and when the officers come to take him to the fatal quarantine island, she goes with him instead of his wife, who loves him but knows that she would be useless for this task.

So brief a sketch of the play's main story is not enough to show how much of its foundation is sound enough and rich in half-found meanings. There are strokes of insight into character that go far. But the writing itself fails to support these insights and motivations. Some of Miss Hopkins' lines, for example, would make hard sledding for any actress; the dinner conversation is very limp. If we go into details, the basic rhythm of the writing is not Southern at all; it has only here and there touches acquired and applied, as with those "Virginia" hams we see smoking in Broadway restaurant windows.

The play as a whole falls between two stools. It needs either to be more penetrating, modern or even searchingly unpleasant; or to be frankly admitted melodrama, romantic, bona fide and glowing. At two of its crises there appear efforts towards some sort of pungency and realism that are vastly misplaced: the younger brother, denouncing Mr. Buckner, says he will shoot the "bastard"; and when he comes back from the duel and puts the pistol in the lap of Julie, who has caused it all, he tells her she is a "bitch." Both these are not only out of color in their slangy modernity, they are entirely impossible to that Southern setting, 1853. The reaction of the other men in Julie's house to this young man's use of "bitch" would not have led to any such effect as the dramatist assumed.

The whole directing of the play needs more fluency and rapport among the characters, and they should flow together by movement and cue, all for the sake of a vital unity in general and Southern in particular.

Of Mr. Donald Oenslager's three designs that of the dining-room is the best; it has great style and the right mood. The front gallery of the house and the great hall —which needs a more dramatic relighting—are both of them above the average. The costumes for the men, their make-ups and wigs, are surprisingly bad; but Mr. Oenslager's designs for the women's costumes are well varied and excellent. Mr. Reed Brown, Jr., understood the elusive role of Preston Kendrick, Miss Laura Bowman as Mammy Winnie played well, and Miss Cora Witherspoon as the guardian aunt looked and played with convincing distinction. Miss Miriam Hopkins, costumed to perfection and wearing her gowns with great beauty of movement, needed in the first part of the play to convey to us, despite the halting scenes written for her, more of the central wildness of the character. Her best scene was that where the curtain descends on her wild "singin' with my niggers." Here she was very fine. And this scene, as it expressed her desperation, willfulness and passion, together with that background and echo of her in the Negro music, was quite magnificent, a curtain which few dramatists could hope to excel.

STARK YOUNG.

Labor and the N. R. A.

THIRTEEN thousand Progressive Miners of America have failed in their plea for an injunction to prevent further discrimination by seven Illinois coal companies which at present employ only members of the United Mine Workers. Judge Louis FitzHenry of Bloomington, sitting in United States District Court at Peoria, Saturday, December 16, allowed a motion by operators' attorneys to dismiss the petition. In defense of his ruling, Judge FitzHenry stated that action should have been instituted only by a United States district attorney on recommendation of the Attorney General. He declared that the court could act only after Progressive Miners had exhausted every means of arbitration permissible under the bituminous coal code. He indicated that no request for deliberation had been made through the code board of the N.I.R.A. This opinion was delivered with the knowledge that Donald Richberg, N.R.A. legal counsel, had said operation of mines employing both Progressives and United Mine Workers would be impracticable. Many rank-and-file members of the Progressive Miners feel that the government is now trying to force all miners into one union, and that the only alternative for them is "militant action." They point out that the single-union idea is part of the Fascist scheme of things in Italy and Germany. But the officers of the Progressive Miners are showing little disposition toward militancy, and indeed are following a conservative policy scarcely to be distinguished from that of the United Mine Workers.

An extraordinary scheme of the Retail Clerks' International Association—an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor—to foster a new type of company union has recently come to light. R. D. Denise, Eastern representative of the International and one of the plan's sponsors, has described it as "a revolutionary departure from trade unionism," as indeed it is. In effect, the Association would sign contracts with individual employers, and set up individual company unions. These the clerks would either have to join or lose their jobs. In addition, the contracts would provide that, once the unions were formed, the A.F. of L. would not meddle in the company's affairs; collective bargaining would be carried on within the company before an arbitration board composed of both employees and employers. Moreover, clerks guilty of agitation or radicalism could be immediately expelled from the union.

The International signed a contract with Ernest West Stiner to establish these unions, giving him exclusive jurisdiction, as general organizer, over all chain grocery-store clerks in the East. Mr. Stiner's chief qualifications as a union organizer are that he has served as management and personnel consultant for merchants and manufacturers

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throughout the country and already has connections with the grocery chains.

The plan, however, is being held in temporary abeyance, pending an investigation ordered by William Green, president of the A.F. of L. But meanwhile, Oscar Lerner, president of the New York Pharmacists' Union, reports that Mr. Denise has been actively following the strategy outlined above. When the Pharmacists' Union—an independent organization—refused to join the A.F. of L., Mr. Denise began organizing unions by first signing up proprietors of drug stores and then forcing the clerks either to pay high initiation fees and dues or lose their jobs. As yet, the A.F. of L. has issued no explanation of how Mr. Denise and Mr. Stiner—neither of them union men—happen to be its authorized representatives.

One of the most criticized practices of the Hoover administration was its habit of issuing misleading and untrustworthy estimates on employment. In 1930 and 1931 it was almost axiomatic that whatever Secretary of Labor Doak or Secretary of Commerce Lamont had to say about the trend of employment was sure to be wrong. Consequently, it is disconcerting to find leading officials in the present administration resorting to the same kind of ballyhoo.

Early in December, for example, Secretary Ickes announced that three million men had been "recalled to work for wages from the public-works fund, with the figure mounting daily." This total was made up roughly as follows: 1,200,000 men employed by the Civil Works Administration, 600,000 employed directly on federal projects and 1,200,000 employed "indirectly" in industrial work. It is the latter estimate that is interesting. It represents the increase in employment, according to Mr. Ickes, in "raw material, transportation and factory work under the regenerative program." A table showing the week-by-week progress of this "indirect" employment was made public by the Secretary. It indicates that between the middle of October and the middle of November there was a gain in jobs in the fields mentioned of at least 300,000, and possibly as much as 400,000.

Last week, however, the Bureau of Labor Statistics issued its report on this period (October 15 to November 15), revealing that quite the opposite occurred—a sharp drop of 6.2 percent in pay rolls and of 3.5 percent in employment. Instead of several hundred thousand men having been recalled to work, the Bureau estimates that approximately 234,000 were discharged. True, the decline in employment might have been much sharper had there been no expenditures by the Public Works Administration. But that is not what Mr. Ickes said. He stressed a sizable gain in jobs created, for which, unfortunately, the evidence is totally lacking.

Similarly, the N.R.A. released two statements last week which might have been much more informative than they were. One of these, dated December 18 and signed by General Johnson, hailed a 20-percent gain in employment in the automobile industry. This information, while probably true, was nearly *three months* old, covering the period between July and September. Meanwhile, the Bureau of Labor Statistics had information, which it made public the following day (December 19), showing that there had been a drop of more than 11 percent in automobile employment between October and November. General Johnson made no mention of this fact. Likewise, the N.R.A. publicity bureau issued, on December 16, an optimistic statement on the steel code in which it stressed a gain of two-tenths of one percent in steel pay rolls between September and October. Had the N.R.A. consulted the Labor Bureau, it might have added that, between October and November, steel pay rolls dropped 12 percent and steel employment more than 3 percent. For these figures were made public just three days later.

CORRESPONDENCE

Invitation to a Bronx Cheer

SIR: Professor Frederick Schönemann, of the University of Berlin, is traveling around the United States delivering pro-Hitler lectures whenever he can get an audience. He is willing, I am reliably informed, to "lecture" for nothing, but likes to have his expenses paid. Having written a book ("Die Kunst der Massenbeeinflüssung") in which he pours contempt on American intelligence, he is now trying to influence that intelligence for the benefit of Hitler's propaganda game. Who is paying his bills? One thing I am sure of is that he is not paying them out of his own pocket for the love of the United States. A loud guffaw should greet him wherever he appears, unless Americans are really as ignorant and as easily misled as Professor Schönemann has portrayed them in his book.

New Milford, Conn. CHARLES A. BEARD.

From the Corn and Hog Belt

SIR: I don't think you have begun to sense the situation of the Middle Western farmers at all. You are way off when you say the farmers' buying strike has not worked. They have said little about it and it has not got publicity, but it has been most effective. Go into any county-seat town and ask big stores if the farmers are buying anything or paying on old debts.

There is a real buyers' strike on and don't forget it. A big merchant in our county-seat town told me (in confidence) that he lost $11,000 last year. Two others told me they have each lost over $5,000. They all are feeling it, the small-town stores are all broke; many in our county seats are just hanging on and can only buy new stock C. O. D. Northwest of here all the buildings, houses, etc., on one of the largest farms, taken over a few weeks before by a big Eastern insurance company, burned down very mysteriously. They got the land back clear. What's it worth?

A newspaper in northern Iowa in an editorial tells its readers to give the government one more chance, then if the corn and hog plan does not get results soon, it will be time for them in bunches of fifty to go out and hang the first rich man they run across and take what he has and divide it. Leaders who are working daily with the farmers say they have changed and are not fooled by Reno or Dickerson, that they are sullen and saying nothing, but if by spring things have not changed, you will see a real strike. They will refuse to pay taxes, interest or debts and will sit down on the land with loaded shotguns and dare you to come and collect.

If the big money men in the East don't wake up and loosen up with cash and pay their own share of the taxes and relieve the farmer, Hell will pop before next summer and you will see a real revolution. . . . The farmers have about gone the limit. If they don't get real returns in steady prices—not mere loans—if the big packers try to pass it all on to the farmers and force prices down still more, you will hear a noise. Our whole government is hanging in the balance, and if the present one fails and we get a real revolt, there will be no millionaires when they are through. Unless the farmer gets his fair return he is not going to continue to pay for this expensive civilization.

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Why don't you tell them back East the day of money control is over and the West is awake and aroused and is going to get its share of the nation's income and wealth or know why. Yours for law and order and good government and a square deal for the farmer.

Deborah, Ia. OSCAR OSWALD SANDBACH.

Fascism in Verse

SIR: Permit me a last line, and anybody may have the last word. What I said in reviewing "Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City" was that Archibald MacLeish in his political pamphlet-poem displayed all the stigmata of one who was blindly drifting toward fascism. Nobody has yet answered this charge, I believe.

Mr. MacLeish says I am badly frightened. Yes, I am, but not for the reasons he enumerates. I, like many others, fear the specter of American fascism. We see it looming in the person of NIRA and in the minds of groping intellectuals like Mr. MacLeish.

We would be glad to know millions of Americans who were as scared and conscious of this protest as we are. We have no pride about the matter. We are willing to be the harsh and unpleasant and sometimes faulty alarm bells of this fear. The attitude of the liberals does not reassure us. They are being as complacent here as were the liberals and socialists of Germany. I made this the real point of my original book review—its title was "Out of the Fascist Unconscious." The anti-Semitic charge was only one point in a series. Within the next year we will be tested on this world issue. Distinguished poets like Mr. MacLeish will be no more exempt than plumbers or housewives. His course seems vague today, yet its general drift is toward fascism, I tried to say. Mr. MacLeish has not yet spoken clearly in answer to such a charge. Yet I hope, within this fateful year, he proves me utterly wrong, and I will apologize to him, to Mr. Sandburg, to The New Republic and the wide world if he does prove me wrong. But one ought not hide behind the skirts of a Muse.

Staten Island, N. Y. MICHAEL GOLD.

From the Kentucky Hills

SIR: It made me cry with disgust to see the letters in The New Republic [October 25] where Don West's scalp is wanted for encouraging a strike. Don West is right. Let the youngsters strike. They have been held too long in school-slavery now. I speak this because I know. I once went to a school of this kind and one year of the school was enough for me—and one year of me was too much for them. If you want to read an account of this, read: "A Freshman at Fishbone," in the February, 1933, issue of The American Mercury. I have never gone back to college. I am farming at the present.

Don West has visited our humble home here in the hills a couple of times. I have never seen a more striking fellow in appearance. We think a lot of Don. He crumbled his bread in his milk and ate it like we did. He beat my father pitching horse-shoes. He was just one of us. He was too tall for one of the doors in our house and too long for the beds. Today, I am too tall for one of the doors in our house and most too long to sleep comfortable in the beds. I remember Don West well and whatever he is accused of I am for him.

Fullerton, Ky. JIM STUART.

"Peace on Earth"

SIR: "Peace on Earth" is the most exciting play I have seen in some years. Presented with great skill by the Theatre Union, in New York City, it serves to renew one's wavering faith in a living theatre.

In reading the reviews of "Peace on Earth," I was not surprised to find that the majority of critics were bored and annoyed by what seemed to me an outstanding dramatic achievement. As is invariably the case with any play which deals with current social problems, the critics were well-nigh unanimous in describing it as "propaganda," "sophomoric," "hysterically written and crudely presented," etc., etc.

All this puzzles me and leads me to believe that the reviewers themselves become intemperate and lose all sense of perspective whenever politics is introduced across the footlights. It seems to me that this talk about propaganda is quite beside the point. A play which deals with world peace, or revolution, or the labor movement, may be either a good play or a bad play. Why should his work be regarded in a different light because a playwright selects a social theme instead of adultery or horse-racing? The critic's emphasis on "propaganda" is simply a reflection of the critic's own state of mind.

I feel strongly that the theatre would be far more adult and entertaining if social themes were more frequently presented, for the simple reason that these themes are vital, interesting and offer the stuff of genuine drama. It seems to me perfectly obvious that a play which is about *something* is more entertaining than a play which is about nothing. Yet plays which are about *anything* are always put in a separate class and labeled "propaganda." . . .

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON.

New York City.

Extracts from Letters

IN a friendly letter of comment on Jonathan Mitchell's article, "Heap Bad Medicine," in The New Republic of November 8, Jay Steinsaltz of New York City makes a number of corrections and qualifications, principally revolving around "the unwarranted inclusion of the pharmacists among the opponents of the Copeland-Tugwell bill." Mr. Steinsaltz is himself a pharmacist, and can testify to a powerful stirring in their ranks. He writes that he was particularly surprised to find the name of the American Pharmaceutical Association beside those of the Proprietary Association and the United Medicine Manufacturers. The Pharmacists' Union of Greater New York, speaking in the name of the employee-pharmacists in the metropolitan area, voted active support of the bill. A nationwide organization of employee-pharmacists is organizing the drug clerks for the same purpose. It is Mr. Steinsaltz' opinion that in this conflict, in many instances, both employees and employers in the drug industry will unite to fight for the bill.

Mary Edna Flegal of Indiana, Pennsylvania, takes Bruce Bliven to task for his article, "A Century of Treadmill," in The New Republic of November 15. She asks why he devoted so much space to the peep-shows of the Streets of Paris and ignored the art and archeological exhibits, the Belgian village with its folk dancing, the Swedish pavilion with its sculpture by Carl Miles and beautiful craft work, the Maya temple with its pieces of Mayan sculpture, the Benton murals in the Indiana State House and many others. While Miss Flegal grants that thousands of visitors from the prairies did not come to the Fair to see these exhibits, there were thousands of others who did and who found that "there was something in color, architecture, sculpture and painting that reflected the spirit of the age." She also mentions the Electrical Building, the Hall of Science and the Chicago Art Institute, which had an average daily attendance of 9,000 at its galleries, as evidence that America is interested in the process of becoming interested in art.

Jay Engle, of the Office Workers' Union, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City, sends an appeal to our readers for funds to aid the organization work of the union. "Not once in the six years' existence of our union have we called for public assistance. . . . Today, however, we find ourselves in need of about $300 which we cannot possibly raise from our union members, whose salaries have been slashed, and a great many of whom are unemployed." Mr. Engle writes that at the present time the Office Workers' Union is making energetic attempts to organize the white-collar workers in the department stores and the Wall Street offices, and that this work is being severely handicaped for lack of funds.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Prophet in His Wilderness

IN 1924 Robinson Jeffers flashed on the literary scene as a phenomenon accidentally discovered through a small book of verse published at the author's expense by a New York linotyper. It is chiefly as a phenomenon that he is still regarded by most of his readers, and as such he is celebrated in Mr. Alberts' monumental bibliography[1]. Ten years ago, at the age of thirty-six, he was known locally and unenthusiastically to a small California audience; his entire literary history up to that time might be accounted for in less than ten of Mr. Alberts' pages. By 1933, his career requires 250 closely packed pages of statistics. Recent American poetry has had no lack of overnight sensations, but the portentousness of Jeffers' themes, the cult-bred notoriety of his reputation, and the luxury patronage to which his publishers have catered, set him apart as a formidable character. His philippics against modern civilization supply for the verse of the past fifteen years the element provided in fiction by Lawrence and in drama by O'Neill. For a generation that thrives on this type of prophetic thunder, he is a figure seriously to be reckoned with.

As such he must be considered here, for his new book[2] requires no special comment. It contains three narratives and twenty-two shorter poems. The title poem is once more an object lesson in human depravity and the moral sanctions in society which foster it. The hero, Lance Fraser, finding his wife in adultery with his brother, kills the brother and goes slowly mad in an attempt to repudiate (under his wife's counsel) any form of expiation that depends on human judgment. Humanity, as at present constituted, is still the glaring error in Jeffers' view of creation. Fraser seeks regeneration through a reversion to the primary and uncorrupted conscience of nature—symbolized by the hawks of the title. He ends by throwing himself down a cliff, leaving his wife to pass the benefits of his impending rebirth of spirit to an unborn child.

The resemblance of this plot to those of "The Women at Point Sur," "Cawdor" and "Thurso's Landing" is obvious, and there is much to encourage the charge that Jeffers, by playing repeatedly on a set of unnatural crimes and violent conclusions, neither makes headway in his ideas nor has an intelligible objective in view. His characters are indistinguishably desperate or willless as individuals, and are agencies for no morality but the anti-human revulsion that makes a running theme in all the poems. The setting is the familiar California scenery whose symbolism reduces man to the puny dimensions appropriate to Jeffers' contempt for him in his present stage of debility. (It remains the one subject that consistently brings out Jeffers' real virtues as a writer.) The verse form is again the loose vers libre that swells, contracts and dilates under no readily discernible function of dramatic effect or tone. These factors combine to make Jeffers suffer from an effect of exhausting his materials by repetition. He cannot be justified by recalling the Elizabethans; they worked on a wholly different basis of human and esthetic values. But it is in the exaggerated extremes to which he pushes his tragedies that his character as a thinker and prophet may be found, and in those themes the strenuous logic to which his position drives him is apparent.

The Alberts bibliography contains a number of statements by Jeffers on his ideas which, though generalized beyond ordinary coherence, reduce the long reach of his dramas to convenient scale. We learn how he feared, after writing "Tamar," that he would be understood to "romanticize unmoral freedom." He therefore employed plots of such unmoral violence as would "strip everything but its natural ugliness from the unmorality." This theory is not without a venerable ancestry, but Aristotle, Longinus and Racine make it depend on unmistakable ethical or social sanctions. These sanctions Jeffers neither recognizes nor respects. He aims simply

> to uncenter the human mind from itself. There is no health for the individual whose attention is taken up with his own mind and processes; equally there is no health for the society that is always introverted on its own members, as ours becomes more and more, the interest engaged inward in love and hatred, companionship and competition. . . . All past cultures have died of introversion at last, and so will this one, but the individual can be free of the net, in his mind.

Beyond this state of "mind" Jeffers offers no prescription for human regeneration; in order to gain it every inherited mode of salvation or morality must be abandoned: "I am sick of life," moans his hero. "I have beaten at the last door and found a fool." And again: "My trouble's my own affair . . . I have beaten like a blind bird at every window of the world. No rational exit. No cure. Nothing." Jeffers has himself said, "It is a fault to be gregarious, it is also a fault to be solitary; we just have to live with our own natures." These natures remain the abstraction toward which Jeffers' tragedies point. Thus far they have found realization in none of his characters. When recognizable moral principles are reduced to triviality, it is impossible for a poet to produce sound drama —a fact apparent not only in the abnormality of Jeffers' characters but in the commonplaceness and futility of their speeches.

Moreover, Jeffers deprives them of the support of any institution. The extremes of his pessimism reduce every type of intellectual idealism or social effort to absurdity. Religions, though "necessary to society in the past . . . derive from a 'private impurity' of some kind in their originators." Science is also a false hope; it seems to "reform the picture of the universe," but merely gives man another instrument for extending the error of his own image; "the values and desires are ever more fixed inward." Society and its rottenness may be symbolized adequately only by incest: "racial introversion—man regarding man exclusively—founding his values, desires, his picture of the universe, all on his own humanity." As for revolution: "some of you think you can save society; I think it is impossible, and that you only hasten the process by decadence." The "industrialized communism" of Marx,

> if it were ever brought into existence, would only be a further step in a bad direction. . . . Civilization will have to go on building up for centuries yet, and its collapse will be gradual and tragic and sordid, and I have no remedy to propose, except for the individual to keep himself out of it as much as he can conven-

[1] A Bibliography of the Works of Robinson Jeffers, by S. S. Alberts. New York: Random House. 278 pages. $10.

[2] Give Your Heart to the Hawks and Other Poems, by Robinson Jeffers. New York: Random House. 199 pages. $2.50.

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iently . . . and exercise his instincts and self-restraints and powers as completely as possible in spite of it.

In answering a questionnaire for The New Masses in 1927, Jeffers' gloom reached a climax in the declaration that "a really new culture could arise only beyond the Lethe of a new dark ages." For him there remain only the sublime and misty consolations of nature. While civilization "makes humanity ridiculous," he remembers "our norm, the unaltered passions," and this supplies him with an esthetic creed:

> The poet, who wishes not to play games with words,
> His affair being to awake dangerous images
> And call the hawks;—they all feed the future, they serve God
> Who is very beautiful, but hardly a friend of humanity.

Obviously the lofty tones of this scorn tend to reduce any reasonable suspicion of it to ridicule. This may be a desirable effect of all supreme art, but it happens to be more often the effect of another kind of art—that of the prophet who cries in a wilderness of his own private convenience, and is therefore difficult to distinguish from a charlatan or a badly deluded man.

Great poetry is often born of a profound dissatisfaction with human nature, but in any valid drama such dissatisfaction is justified only when it takes the form of an actualizing grasp of character and its principles. Much is made of Jeffers' stone tower on the California coast. His poems show him living in a tower that removes him from any grasp of practical existence, and consequently from the authority that empowers a Shakespeare, a Chekhov, a Racine or a Hardy. When a tower produces this aberration of vision and judgment, it makes little difference whether it is built of stone or ivory.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

Mirrors of Downing Street

War Memoirs of David Lloyd George: 1914-1915; 1915-1916. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. Volumes I and II. 469 and 449 pages. $4 each.

AS "THE only official figure who went right through it from the declaration of War to the signing of Peace," Mr. David Lloyd George has a story to tell that is both interesting and important, especially now that he is inclined to tell rather more than would have been possible a few years ago. He is, indeed, too modest—at least once in these bulky volumes—when he says merely that he "was the only person in authority who was in Mr. Britling's position." He did more than see the War through. From the vantage point of the British Cabinet he saw the War approaching; saw it in progress; and as Prime Minister helped at Versailles to make its aftermath still more disastrous.

He speaks, therefore, with the authority of a very special insider on the antecedents of the War as well as on the tragic two years which are the main theme of these volumes. He has chosen to deal rather briefly with the coming of the War and in greater detail with the struggle to gear the existing British industrial machine into the immense war machine that had to be improvised. Brief as it is, however, this portion of his book offers three important bits of information. One is Lord Rosebery's prophecy, made privately to Lloyd George himself the moment the entente with France had been established in 1904: "It means war with Germany in the end." Of special interest to historians is Mr. Lloyd George's own statement that the threat of war in his speech at the Mansion House, London—which is supposed to have forced Germany to capitulate in the Agadir crisis—was made of his own initiative, but only after it had been approved by Asquith, then Prime Minister, and Grey, Foreign Minister. The Cabinet as a whole was not consulted.

Equally important is his admission that the Asquith Cabinet allowed foreign affairs to drift. "The Cabinet," he says, "devoted a ridiculously small percentage of its time to a consideration of foreign affairs." Northcliffe once told him that a London newspaper editor was "better informed about what was happening in the capitals of the world than any Cabinet Minister." The reason? The Foreign Office never sent Cabinet members any dispatches unless they could be "read without the danger of any indiscreet revelations." In other words, the Cabinet got only the documents that didn't matter.

Mr. Lloyd George himself knew nothing of the military arrangements with France until 1911; "the Cabinet as a whole were not acquainted with them until the following year." By that time, "we were so deeply involved in the details of military and naval plans that it was too late to repudiate the inference" that national honor was involved.

The rest of the first volume is devoted to the War in the government offices in London, a familiar story of official ineptitude. The professional soldiers could not get the idea that this was not another Boer War. They condescended to accept an adequate supply of munitions only when forced to it. They insisted on dealing with a few well known armament firms instead of putting every available factory into munitions production. The whole situation was complicated by British Labor's natural hesitancy at even temporary abandonment of hard-won rights, lest those rights might have to be won all over again.

In the second volume, Mr. Lloyd George extends his effort to reform munitions supply to reforming the military mismanagement of the War itself. Even as War Minister and later as Prime Minister, he was content to leave the direction of actual combat in the hands of the generals; but he ultimately insisted on enough political control of the grand strategy to end some of their worst blunders. He paints a horrifying picture of mismanagement behind the lines and incredible stupidity among soldiers who failed to envisage the need of Inter-Allied coördination and to work out a united strategy. He believes that the British staff was the worst because the British army was too small to attract brains of the same caliber as the larger Continental armies. It did not offer a career.

Still an impenitent "Easterner," he believes that the crowning folly of the War was the insistence on years of fruitless attack on the impregnable German front in the West, when a more vigorous policy in the Balkans and the Near East would have postponed the Russian revolution until after the War, knocked out Turkey and unified four strong Balkan armies against the Central Powers on their weakest flank.

His comments on other public figures are acid but delightful. Balfour "saw both sides too clearly," and in consequence could never make up his mind. Asquith had a "morbid shrinking from unpleasantness." Since the War was frequently very unpleasant, he made a bad Prime Minister in wartime, though excellent in peace. Sir Edward Carson and Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson "suffered from the same unmanageable contrariness." Bonar Law was "both fearless and apprehensive," and his favorite phrase was: "There is lots of trouble ahead." Mr. J. M.

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Keynes is described as "acrobatic," "puckish" and "jargonish"—"an entertaining economist whose bright but shallow dissertations on finance and political economy, when not taken too seriously, always provide a source of innocent merriment." This is obvious retaliation for certain blistering passages by Mr. Keynes; but could as much be said for some of Mr. Lloyd George's politico-economic views during the Peace Conference?

Apparently the "Memoirs" give the author a long awaited chance to say what he really thought of his co-workers. Nothing, however, cuts quite so deep as one frivolous detail which he takes an impish delight in recording. As Minister of Munitions he had to remove all mirrors from the room in an erstwhile private residence that had become his office. His visitors spent all their time looking at themselves and wouldn't get down to business.

JOHN BAKELESS.

The Wealth of the World

World Resources and Industries: An Appraisal of Agricultural and Industrial Resources, by Erich W. Zimmermann. New York: Harper and Brothers. 862 pages. $5.

THIS long, detailed study brings together a vast amount of information previously scattered hither, thither and yon, reduces it to order and presents it to the reader in a form which makes it possible to gain some conception of the foundations on which our present world rests —and any future world as well. Professor Zimmermann is, of course, chiefly interested in presenting an exhaustive description of world resources. On the other hand, he is not at all blind to the significance of the present system of ownership and control—he is capable of writing that "In reality, the so-called group interest may not be much more than the interest of a dominant class parading in the cloak of social necessity, and national policy may aim at the social objective of a class or a combination of classes rather than at the fullest satisfaction of the most urgent wants of the greatest number."

The book is truly encyclopedic. If you wish information about any of the important world resources—about wheat, sugar, aluminum, scrap iron, rayon, coal, electricity, copper, petroleum, tree crops and many other items—you will find them treated in a comprehensive fashion (and with a valuable bibliography appended). As a sample of Professor Zimmermann's technique let us take aluminum, Mr. Andrew W. Mellon's favorite metal. Aluminum is an entirely new product, unknown to the ancients. It is astonishingly light and strong; its uses are constantly expanding, invading even the strongholds of steel; and there is a "remarkable concentration of ownership and control over the production of crude aluminum," a concentration in the hands of the Mellon family. And so it comes about that "while the United States Steel Corporation and the Anaconda Copper Company are merely powerful representatives of their respective industries, the Aluminum Company of America is the aluminum industry of North America, and at the same time is powerful in the European industry. Moreover, this company may be said to be more definitely interested in the fabricating end than is either of the other two organizations named." Professor Zimmermann attributes this largely to the fact that progress in aluminum production and use has come so suddenly that a patent monopoly has been possible. After canvassing possible checks upon the Mellon monopoly, Professor Zimmermann finds but one which seems potentially efficient—and that is the check brought about by a too high price which might encourage the substitution of another metal.

The discussion of this and other resources leads to a conclusion distinctly liberal: "Social welfare demands abundance, distributed justly and spread out over a longer time than even the most progressive and liberal corporation executive at present dares to consider."

H. G.

Malbrouk s'en va t'en Guerre

Marlborough: His Life and Times, by Winston S. Churchill. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 2 vols. 622 pages. $6.

IN WRITING the life of his great ancestor, Mr. Churchill had as his first objective to clear the reputation of the Duke from the mist of ill fame which has clouded it, and especially to refute the strictures of Macaulay. As attorney for the defense Mr. Churchill makes the best possible case. There are three counts in the indictment. The first, drawn by Mrs. Manley in her *chronique scandaleuse* of the time in "The New Atlantis," is that John Churchill profited by the fact that his sister was mistress to the Duke of York, afterwards James II; and that he shared with the King the favors of his second cousin Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland. Mr. Churchill admits all this but offers against the scandal of Marlborough's youth the passion and fidelity of his married life. The second count is that Marlborough was parsimonious and venal. To this Mr. Churchill pleads that young Churchill's father, a Cavalier, had been ruined by the Civil War, and was compelled to bring up his family on the charity of his mother-in-law, who belonged to the Puritan party. The boy was early impressed with the necessity of having money in his purse, and the habit of thrift, in an age when public office was recognized as an opportunity of private gain, made him a millionaire. The third count, that Marlborough deserted James II and carried the army over to William, and thereafter entered into treasonable communication with the exiled monarch in Saint Germains, Mr. Churchill likewise meets by extenuation. From childhood John Churchill had learned the necessity of standing well with both sides; and later in keeping a foot in either camp he was but practising the politics of his time. Mr. Churchill has no difficulty in proving that Macaulay showed animus in holding the Duke to a higher standard than he enforced in the case of others. The most damaging charge of all, that Marlborough wrote to James II in France of the proposed expedition against Brest in order, as Macaulay hints, to ruin the British commander, Mr. Churchill meets by arguing that the testimony in favor of the existence of an alleged letter, no copy of which has been found, is not sufficient to overcome the improbability of its having been written. Altogether it is to be said that in this portion of his task Mr. Churchill shows knowledge and acumen. Besides the recognized authorities he has drawn upon the archives of Blenheim for documents hitherto unpublished, especially Marlborough's letters to his wife, which set his character in its most winning light.

It cannot be doubted that Mr. Churchill has a second intention in his work, to vindicate the ideal of imperial Britain as a world power and arbitrator of Europe, the position to which she was first raised by Marlborough's genius in politics and war. This purpose appears in occasional passages in Mr. Churchill's well known declamatory style. We may be sure that it will further animate the succeeding

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volumes of the narrative, which will deal with the World War of 1702-13. Thus far it would seem that the argument for national greatness as the *summum bonum* of mankind gains little support from the character which Mr. Churchill presents as a national hero.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Two Sides of a Continent

Lowered Boats: A Chronicle of the American Whaling Industry, by Foster Rhea Dulles. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 292 pages. $2.75.

San Francisco: A Pageant, by Charles Caldwell Dobie. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 356 pages. $5.

YOUNG Quakers from Nantucket and quiet farmboys from Vermont took naturally to the great uncertain gamble of hunting whales in the first half of the last century. Matching leviathan seemed to have its attractions for lads whose wits and strength had been matched, as had that of their forebears, against great natural elements on shore. Perhaps, when the land was fairly mastered, the sober routine of shore life compelled them to set forth on this, one of the world's vast chases.

But whaling was business as well as adventure. "The fat of the spermaceti whale," John Adams wrote to Pitt, "gives the clearest and most beautiful flame of any substance that is known in nature, and we are all surprised that you prefer darkness, and consequent robberies, burglaries, and murders in your streets, to receiving, as a remittance, our spermaceti oil." After the Revolution Adams was urging that English duties on "our oil" be lowered. Because of whaling, Nantucketers became almost a separate nation during the two wars with England in their effort to protect their trade.

A full rich chronicle of whaling both as business and adventure is contained in Mr. Dulles's book. With a liberal use of the abundant sources, he has traced the evolution of whaling from the days when Indians hunted obscure monsters along the shores of Long Island and when Captain John Smith had a "plot" to "take" whales. The differentiated quests for right whales, sperm whales, bowheads in the Arctic, are all described. The narrative includes a picturesque account of the raids on the whaling fleets during the Civil War by Semmes of the "Shenandoah." Mutinies, shipwreck, the toll of the whale's devouring jaws, the unbroken dullness of mere sailing, the increasingly sordid ways of living for the common sailor—all parts of the mixed story are amply given.

With the discovery of oil in Pennsylvania the long epos came to an end. As Mr. Dulles unrolls it, a familiar pattern appears. At first whaling was a simple, coöperative affair; common sailors shared with the officers in the rich spoils of the chase. Gradually a disbalance appeared; the sailors no longer had a share; even the officers had small returns; the owners of the whaleships often belonged to the order of absentees. Whaling became big business all around. Yet there is nothing in Mr. Dulles's chronicle to show—probably there are no facts to indicate—that this transition was wholly the result of the famous predatory spirit, unless everyone concerned is indicted. Those quiet Vermont boys, even many of the Nantucketers, in an early day turned to whaling partly for adventure but in the main to earn enough to live comfortably on land. In spite of strong traditions they were not concerned with building up a trade or a guild or a caste. Their loyalty was to themselves, and the trade was appropriated wholesale by those who wanted to keep it.

Mr. Charles Dobie has written the best sort of history of San Francisco because it is informal and because he has continually brought to it his own sense of the savor of place. At the same time, his substantial volume has a firm historical underply. Half of it is given to the early navigators, the expedition of Anza, the period of Spanish settlement, the coming of Frémont, the chequered years of the gold rush. Nothing new is added here, but the whole is freshly put together with many lively interpolations; and when Mr. Dobie writes of North Beach, Russian Hill, Little Italy, the region "south of the slot," he not only draws upon established effects, but continually widens them. Here is no mere repetition of cherished old-time talk about San Francisco: even for those who know the city well there will be a great amount of news. Fortunately this writer has a most proper sense of food; his knowledge of drink is equally sensitive. Old odd characters have a place—Lily Coit, Mammy Pleasant and the rest—but here too something new is always added. For those who must have it, there is a sufficient recognition of the less attractive aspects of civic life in San Francisco; Mr. Dobie is not romantic about the Barbary Coast. But on the whole this is a romantic book, in an agreeable sense. It is amply illustrated by pencil drawings of character and charm by E. H. Suydam.

CONSTANCE ROURKE.

Books in Brief

AMERICANA

CHILDREN AND PURITANISM, by Sanford Fleming. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 236 pages. $2.50.*

It was a far, far better thing to be a child almost anywhere in the past than in Puritan New England. Such is the conclusion forced on one by Professor Fleming's sober study of a distressing subject. In that sick world, whose sadistic-masochistic gloom was lit up only by the imminent flames of Hell, there was no understanding of the nature of children, who were subjected to the same religious disciplines, judged by the same standards, and were apparently capable of the same neurotic terrors as their elders. The more they wept and worried about their souls, the more pleased were the parents. The most popular books for children were, first, the Bible, then the New England Primer, beginning with the well known verse, "In Adam's fall, We sinned all," whose largest picture was the burning of a Smithfield martyr. Next in popularity to the Primer was "The Day of Doom: A Practical Description of the Great and Last Judgment. With a short Discourse on Eternity."

STEEL TRAILS: The Epic of the Railroads, by Martin D. Stevers. *New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 374 pages. $3.75.*

Mr. Stevers has written a most informative and interesting book on the tremendously complex process of transporting goods and passengers over the nation's railways. In a story packed with interesting anecdotes and commentaries, he covers the development of the railroad from the first days of colliery haulage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries down to the high-pressure locomotives of the present day. He never allows technical details to become divorced from the general operations with which they are involved. Chiefly the fault of the book is that it too often assumes that railroading economics and technological development are rational, and are affected for the most part only by natural obstacles, including natural ignorance. Thus, Mr. Stevers discusses the electrification of the Milwaukee's famous mountain section as though the process itself accounted for the debt which forced the road into receivership—when, as a matter of fact,

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the inside story of how the Milwaukee was shaken down through control of power sources by its own directors was made public many months ago. The social implications of railroad transport are largely overlooked. But the book is extremely valuable for the technical information which it sets forth in an interesting and competent manner. For the reader who wishes to get behind "the mystery of the time table," who wishes to know something about train-operation routine and emergency, about the economics of grade reduction, and in fact all of the ins and outs of modern railroading—and ancient—"Steel Trails" is strongly to be recommended.

OUT OF THE WEST, by Rufus Rockwell Wilson. *New York: The Press of the Pioneers. 452 pages. $3.*

Rufus Rockwell Wilson is primarily interested in individual achievement, but he writes on all the phases of Western development from the mountain man to the homesteader, and his leisurely progress, cumbered with the impedimenta of research, is a tour of pioneer history in a covered wagon.

Biography and Memoirs

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A BIRD LOVER, by Frank M. Chapman. *New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 433 pages. $3.75.*

This is the story of an avocation that became a career. As a boy and as a young man, Frank Chapman spent all his spare moments in listening to and tracking down strange birds. Eventually spare moments were too few and he gave up his banking job to devote himself to ornithology. The result of this decision may be seen today in the Bird Collections and Habitat Groups at the American Museum of Natural History, with which Mr. Chapman has been connected for nearly half a century. He tells his story—which is also to a large extent the history of American ornithology for this period—with enthusiasm and charm.

BRANDEIS: Lawyer and Judge in the Modern State, by A. T. Mason. *Princeton University Press. 190 pages. $2.*

Professor Mason traces Mr. Justice Brandeis' development as lawyer, economic critic and judge, and attempts an appraisal of his influence on present-day thought and governmental action. The book, together with a forthcoming study of Mr. Justice Cardozo, will be reviewed in a later issue.

BLAKE, by Alan Clutton-Brock. *140 pages.*
BURNS, by Catherine Carswell. *141 pages.*
Great Lives Series. *New York: The Macmillan Company. $.75 each.*

These are perhaps the best of the eighteen biographies published thus far in the Great Lives Series. Mr. Clutton-Brock uses Blake's poetry and painting as a biographical source, with brilliant success; Miss Carswell paints the social and economic background which framed Burns's career more completely and more intelligently than any other biographer represented.

H. M. STANLEY, by A. J. A. Symons. *128 pages.*
EDWARD VII, by H. C. Wortham. *143 pages.*
Great Lives Series. *New York: The Macmillan Company. $.75 each.*

Stanley's explorations, more than any other event, opened up Africa. Stanley was naïve enough to believe that capitalist imperialism would use traders and missionaries as two salvation armies to civilize the Dark Continent. He lived long enough to realize how he had been betrayed by that royal sharper, Leopold of Belgium, who turned the Congoland into a slave estate. Mr. Symons' account is spirited but he could have lent macabre interest to it by showing more fully than he did what use capitalist Europe made of Stanley's discoveries. Mr. Wortham regards Edward VII as a great man and a builder of empire because he swayed mobs by being a good fellow, and because he said a tactful thing now and then to foreign ambassadors. His enthusiasm seems excessive in the light of the evidence he gives.

THEATRES

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Reference

EVERYMAN'S ENCYCLOPEDIA, WORLD ATLAS VOLUME. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 403 pages. $3.*

This convenient small atlas, issued as a supplement to Everyman's Encyclopedia, may be bought separately. It contains 224 pages of colored maps, followed by an index of 35,000 place names. The maps—which, though small, are clear and accurate—show the world as of the year 1930. That is, they are up to date except as regards the recent Japanese conquests on the mainland of Asia and the changes wrought in Russia by the Five Year Plan.

Verse

THE BORZOI CHAPBOOKS: Against the Cold, by Witter Bynner; First Words Before Spring, by Louis Untermeyer; This Measure, by Léonie Adams; The Lone Striker, by Robert Frost. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 4 pages each. $.25 each.*

These four chapbooks are additions to a series which Mr. Knopf conceived a year ago. The idea is a happy one—a single poem is decoratively printed on colored paper and enclosed in an envelope to match, as a substitute for the flat and unprofitable holiday card. It is only to be regretted that the job has not been better done. The most that can be said for the poems is that they are good enough. Robert Frost's is remarkable for having no relation to the season and very little to life. Léonie Adams', though not up to her own high standard, is the finest in the collection of four. With the exception of Miss Drewry's designs for Witter Bynner's group of sonnets, the decorations are without distinction.

Fiction

MR. DARLINGTON'S DANGEROUS AGE, by Isa Glenn. *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.*

This book, borrowing its theme and treatment from Henry James, recounts the emotional education of an American banker of pre-war innocence, who goes to Manila in search of an erring younger brother. He is forced into linen suits, spends his evenings holding hands with a sympathetic adventuress, and eventually loses his mental chastity in a passion for his brother's mistress. The background of American life in the Philippines is well drawn. The characters met by Mr. Darlington in the Walled City are less authentic and the dénouement is disappointing; but these things are given a strictly ideological significance, one of the virtues of the story being the fact that Mr. Darlington's seduction is a psychological problem. The novel lacks any significance whatever, but this doesn't keep it from being one of the more readable pieces of recent fiction.

Contributors

LEON TROTSKY was chairman of the Committee which made the military preparations for the October revolution in Russia.

ROBERT S. LYND is a member of the Consumers' Board of the N.R.A. and professor of Social Science at Columbia University. He contributed "The People as Consumers" to "Recent Social Trends," and is co-author of "Middletown."

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL, professor of English at Loyola University, Chicago, and associate editor of Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, is at present preparing a critical study of twentieth-century poetry.

JOHN BAKELESS, a former editor of The Living Age and former managing editor of The Forum, is well known as the author of several books on war, including "The Origin of the Next War" and "The Economic Causes of Modern War." He has also written "Magazine Making" and acted as editor of the 1932 Conference Report of the Institute of Politics at Williamstown.

CONSTANCE ROURKE, author of "Trumpets of Jubilee," "Troupers of the Gold Coast" and "American Humor," has recently completed a biography of David Crockett, which will be published by Harcourt, Brace and Company next spring.

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